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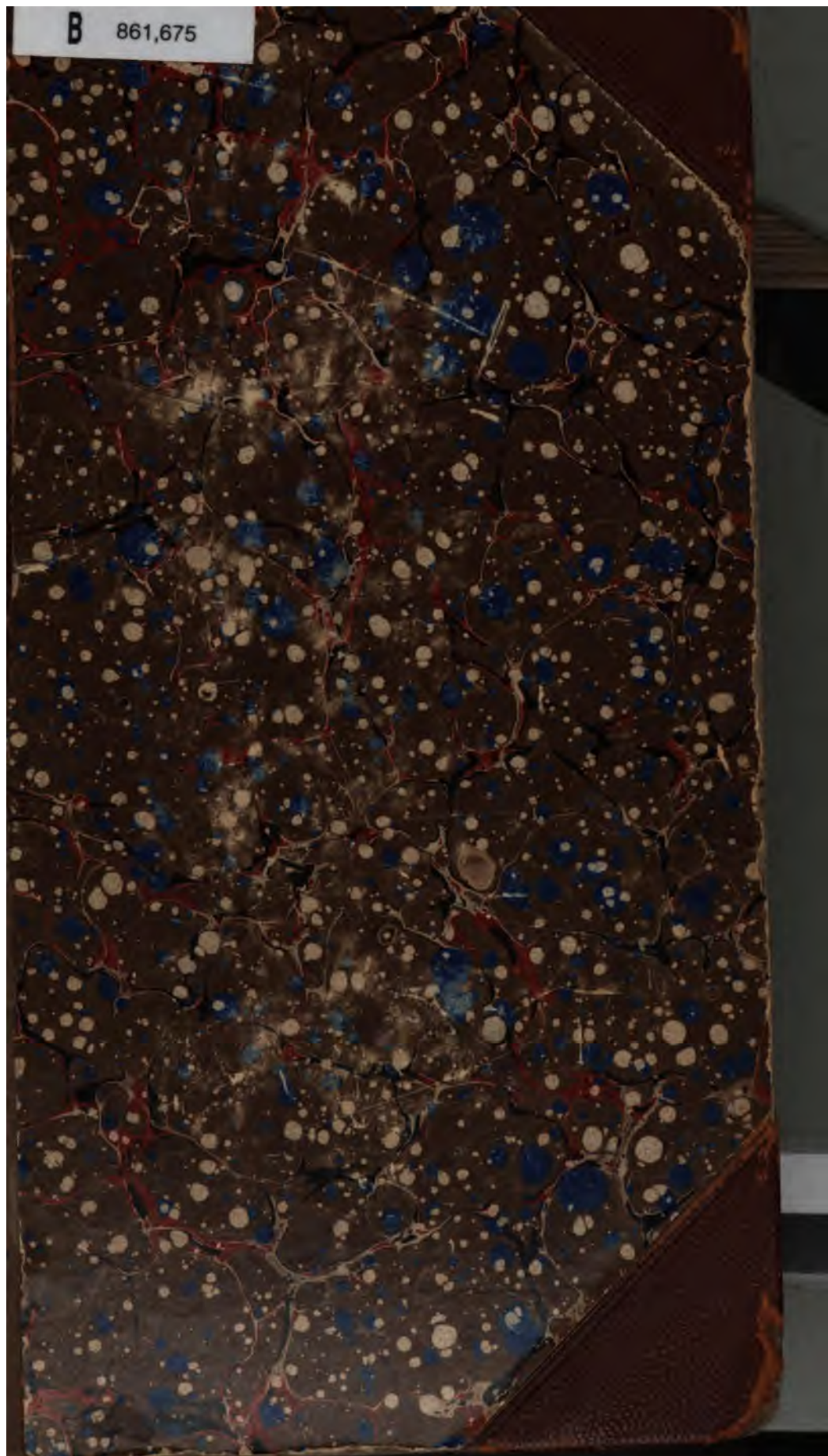
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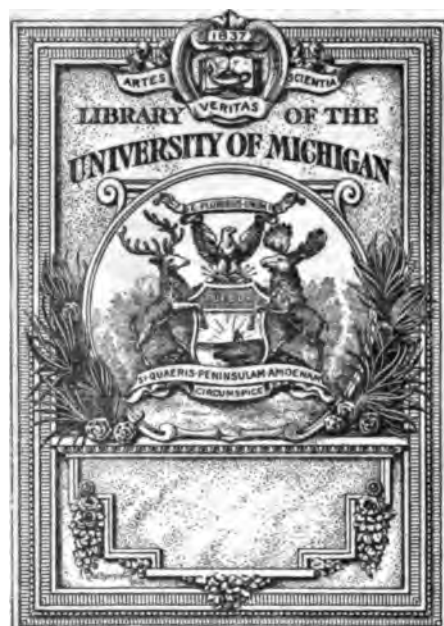




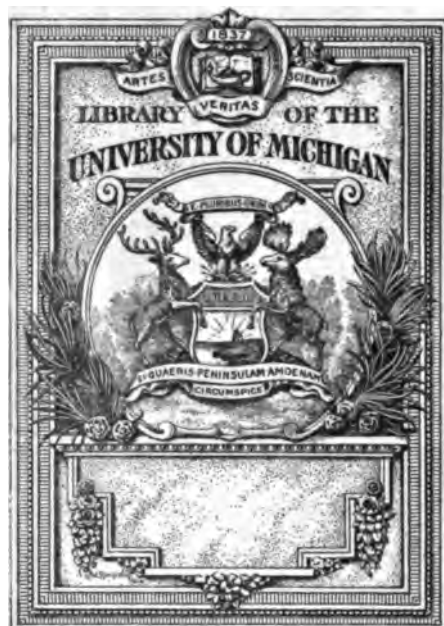




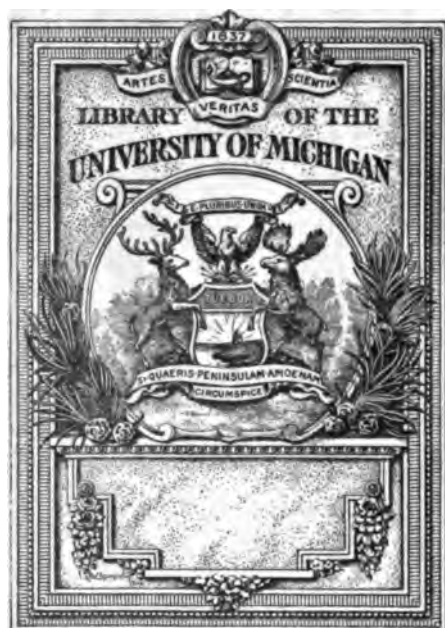


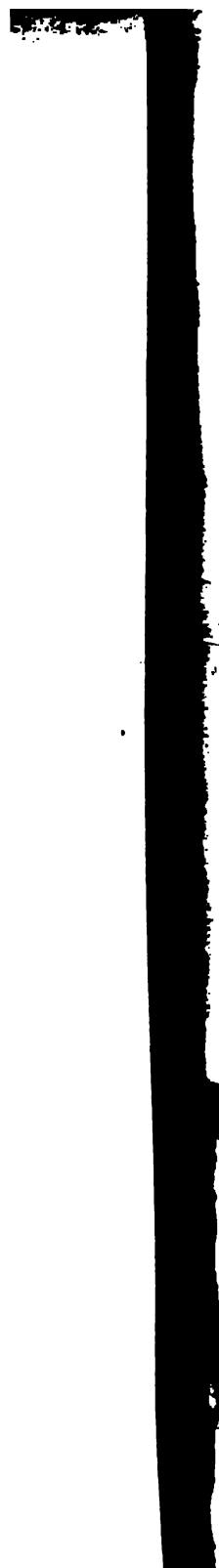














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1896.

got up at the same hour every day, and did the same things in the same rotation, day by day the same. She said that this was the greatest support in the world, and that routine is a kind of salvation. It may be so ; but it is a very dull salvation, and I used to feel that I would rather have incident, whatever kind of incident it might be. But then at that time I was not old, which makes all the difference.

At the time of which I speak the deep recess of the drawing-room window was a great comfort to me. Though she was an old lady (perhaps because she was so old) she was very tolerant, and had a kind of feeling for me. She never said a word, but often gave me a smile when she saw how I had built myself up, with my books and my basket of work. I did very little work, I fear—now and then a few stitches when the spirit moved me, or when I had got well afloat in a dream, and was more tempted to follow it out than to read my book, as sometimes happened. At other times, and if the book were interesting, I used to get through volume after volume sitting there, paying no attention to anybody. And yet I did pay a kind of attention. Aunt Mary's old ladies came in to call, and I heard them talk, though I very seldom listened ; but for all that, if they had anything to say that was interesting, it is curious how I found it in my mind afterwards, as if the air had blown it to me. They came and went, and I had the sensation of their old bonnets gliding out and in, and their dresses rustling ; and now and then had to jump up and shake hands with some one who knew me, and asked after my papa and mamma. Then Aunt Mary would give me a little smile again, and I slipped back to my window.

She never seemed mother would not it, I know. She remembered dozens were to do. She me up-stairs to which I was quite not want, or down some quite unnecessary the housemaid. I me running about was one reason why of Aunt Mary's and the deep recess, and the curtain over it, and the seat, where one many things with fault with for until ever we had anything with us in these sent to St Rule's strength. And then at the time of when to speak.

Everybody had I learned to speak fantastic and fanciful and all the other was a girl who may poetry, and to be that is so often made. People don't know when they say fanciful like Madge Wildfire of that sort. My I should always be nonsense out of really I was not a sense. I was rather otherwise. I would trouble to anybody left to myself. It had a sort of second-consciousness of things no attention. Everything the most interesting things that were about blew in to me what the people the streets as though the window. Au

[Jan.

1896.]

A Story of the Seen and the Unseen.

said I could do two or indeed three things at once—both read and listen, and see. I am sure that I did not listen much, and seldom looked out, of set purpose—as some people do who notice what bonnets the ladies in the street have on; but I did hear what I couldn't help hearing, even when I was reading my book, and I did see all sorts of things, though often for a whole half-hour I might never lift my eyes.

This does not explain what I said at the beginning, that there were many discussions about that window. It was, and still is, the last window in the row, of the College Library, which is opposite my aunt's house in the High Street. Yet it is not exactly opposite, but a little to the west, so that I could see it best from the left side of my recess. I took it calmly for granted that it was a window like any other till I first heard the talk about it which was going on in the drawing-room. "Have you never made up your mind, Mrs Balcarres," said old Mr Pitmilley, "whether that window opposite is a window or no?" He said Mistress Balcarres—and he was always called Mr Pitmilley, Morton: which was the name of his place.

"I am never sure of it, to tell the truth," said Aunt Mary, "all these years."

"Bless me!" said one of the old ladies, "and what window may that be?"

Mr Pitmilley had a way of laughing as he spoke, which did not please me; but it was true that he was not perhaps desirous of pleasing me. He said, "Oh, just the window opposite," with his laugh running through his words; "our friend can never make up her mind about it, though she has been living opposite it since——"

"You need never mind the date," said another; "the Leebree window! Dear me, what should it be but a window? up at the height it could not be a door."

"The question is," said my aunt, "if it is a real window with glass in it, or if it is merely painted, if it once was a window, and has been built up. And the other people look at it, the less they are able to say."

"Let me see this window," said old Lady Carnbee, who was very active and strong-minded; and then they all came crowding up to me—three or four old ladies, very eager, and Mr Pitmilley's white hair appearing over their heads, and my aunt sitting quiet and smiling behind.

"I mind the window very well," said Lady Carnbee; "ay: and do more than me. But in its present appearance it is just like any other window; but has it been cleaned, I should say, the memory of man."

"I see what ye mean," said one of the others. "It is just a very dead thing without any reflection in it; but I've seen as bad before."

"Ay, it's dead enough," said another, "but that's no rule; these hizzies of women-servants this ill age——"

"Nay, the women are wiser enough," said the softest voice of all, which was Aunt Mary's. "I will never let them risk their lives cleaning the outside of mine. And there are no women-servants in the Old Library: there is may be something more in it than that."

They were all pressing into my recess, pressing upon me, a row of old faces, peering into something they could not understand. I had a sense in my mind how curious it was, the wall of old ladies in their old satin gowns

glazed with age, Lady Carnbee with her lace about her head. Nobody was looking at me or thinking of me; but I felt unconsciously the contrast of my youngness to their oldness, and stared at them as they stared over my head at the Library window. I had given it no attention up to this time. I was more taken up with the old ladies than with the thing they were looking at.

"The framework is all right at least, I can see that, and pented black."

"And the panes are pented black too. It's no window, Mrs Balcarres. It has been filled in, in the days of the window duties: you will mind, Laddy Carnbee."

"Mind!" said that oldest lady. "I mind when your mother was married, Jeanie: and that's neither the day nor yesterday. But as for the window, it's just a delusion: and that is my opinion of the matter, if you ask me."

"There's a great want of light in that muckle room at the college," said another. "If it was a window, the Library would have more light."

"One thing is clear," said one of the younger ones, "it cannot be a window to see through. It may be filled in or it may be built up, but it is not a window to give light."

"And who ever heard of a window that was no to see through?" Lady Carnbee said. I was fascinated by the look on her face, which was a curious scornful look as of one who knew more than she chose to say: and then my wandering fancy was caught by her hand as she held it up, throwing back the lace that drooped over it. Lady Carnbee's lace was the chief thing about her—heavy black Spanish lace with large flowers. Everything she wore was trimmed

with it. over her hand could lace was She had taper, which mired in hand was more than and blood veins star and she among of an ugly were too wound r yellow si on: and turned to had twist more con while the derneath like some and send The hand almost to ornamen my half too seer was as clutch the luv —wit! the h Pr the ladies Mr stor tall a Or di n t i

such attention to everything Mr Pitmilley said.

"For my part, it is my opinion there is no window there at all," he said. "It's very like the thing that's called in scienteefic language an optical illusion. It arises generally, if I may use such a word in the presence of ladies, from a liver that is not just in the perfit order and balance that organ demands—and then you will see things—a blue dog, I remember, was the thing in one case, and in another——"

"The man has gane gyte," said Lady Carnbee; "I mind the windows in the Auld LeebRARY as long as I mind anything. Is the LeebRARY itself an optical illusion too?"

"Na, na," and "No, no," said the old ladies; "a blue dogue would be a strange vagary: but the Library we have all kent from our youth," said one. "And I mind when the Assemblies were held there one year when the Town Hall was building," another said.

"It is just a great divert to me," said Aunt Mary: but what was strange was that she paused there, and said in a low tone, "now": and then went on again, "for whoever comes to my house, there are aye discussions about that window. I have never just made up my mind about it myself. Sometimes I think it's a case of these wicked window duties, as you said, Miss Jeanie, when half the windows in our houses were blocked up to save the tax. And then, I think, it may be due to that blank

kind of building like the new buildings on the Eart Mound in Edinburgh, where windows are just ornaments. And then whiles I am sure I can see the glass shining when the sun catches it in the afternoon."

"You could so easily satisfy yourself, Mrs Balcarres, if you were to——"

"Give a laddie a penny to buy a stone, and see what happens," said Lady Carnbee.

"But I am not sure that I have any desire to satisfy myself," Aunt Mary said. And then there was a stir in the room, and I had come out from my recess and opened the door for the old ladies and them down-stairs, as they all went away following one another.

Pitmilley gave his arm to Lady Carnbee, though she was always contradicting him; and so the party dispersed. Aunt Mary came to the head of the stairs where her guests in an old-fashioned gracious way, while I went down with them to see that the matter was ready at the door. When she came back Aunt Mary was standing in the recess looking out. Returning to my seat she came with a kind of wistful look.

"Well, honey: and what is your opinion?"

"I have no opinion. I have been reading my book all the time," she said.

"And so you were, honey, but no' very civil; but all the same I ken well you heard every word we said."

II.

It was a night in June; dinner was long over, and had it been winter the maids would have been shutting up the house, and my Aunt Mary preparing to go up-stairs to her room. But it was

still clear daylight, that daylight out of which the sun has been long gone, and which has no longer any rose reflections, but all has sunk into a pearly neutral tint—a light which is daylight yet is not daylight.

We had taken a turn in the garden after dinner, and now we had returned to what we called our usual occupations. My aunt was reading. The English post had come in, and she had got her 'Times,' which was her great diversion. The 'Scotsman' was her morning reading, but she liked her 'Times' at night.

As for me, I too was at my usual occupation, which at that time was doing nothing. I had a book as usual, and was absorbed in it: but I was conscious of all that was going on all the same. The people strolled along the broad pavement, making remarks as they passed under the open window which came up into my story or my dream, and sometimes made me laugh. The tone and the faint sing-song, or rather chant, of the accent, which was "a wee Fifeish," was novel to me, and associated with holiday, and pleasant; and sometimes they said to each other something that was amusing, and often something that suggested a whole story; but presently they began to drop off, the footsteps slackened, the voices died away. It was getting late, though the clear soft daylight went on and on. All through the lingering evening, which seemed to consist of interminable hours, long but not weary, drawn out as if the spell of the light and the outdoor life might never end, I had now and then, quite unawares, cast a glance at the mysterious window which my aunt and her friends had discussed, as I felt, though I dared not say it even to myself, rather foolishly. It caught my eye without any intention on my part, as I paused, as it were, to take breath, in the flowing and current of undistinguishable thoughts and things from without and within which carried me along. First it occurred to me, with a little sensa-

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I could see the grey space and air a little deeper, and a sort of vision, very dim, of a wall, and something against it; something dark, with the blackness that a solid article, however indistinctly seen, takes in the lighter darkness that is only space—a large, black, dark thing coming out into the grey. I looked more intently, and made sure it was a piece of furniture, either a writing-table or perhaps a large bookcase. No doubt it must be the last, since this was part of the old library. I never visited the old College Library, but I had seen such places before, and I could well imagine it to myself. How curious that for all the time these old people had looked at it, they had never seen this before!

It was more silent now, and my eyes, I suppose, had grown dim with gazing, doing my best to make it out, when suddenly Aunt Mary said, "Will you ring the bell, my dear? I must have my lamp."

"Your lamp?" I cried, "when it is still daylight." But then I gave another look at my window, and perceived with a start that the light had indeed changed: for now I saw nothing. It was still light, but there was so much change in the light that my room, with the grey space and the large shadowy bookcase, had gone out, and I saw them no more: for even a Scotch night in June, though it looks as if it would never end, does darken at the last. I had almost cried out, but checked myself, and rang the bell for Aunt Mary, and made up my mind I would say nothing till next morning, when to be sure naturally it would be more clear.

Next morning I rather think I forgot all about it—or was busy: or was more idle than usual: the two things meant nearly the same. At all events I thought no more

of the window, though I still in my own, opposite to it, occupied with some other fancy. Aunt Mary's visitors came usual in the afternoon; but the talk was of other things, and a day or two nothing at all happened to bring back my thought into this channel. It might be nearly a week before the subject came back, and once more it was old Lady Carnbee who set me thinking; not that she said anything upon that particular thing. But she was the last of my afternoon guests to go away, and when she rose to leave she threw up her hands, with those living gesticulations which so many Scotch ladies have. "My faith," said she, "there is that bairn that still like a dream. Is the creature bewitched, Mary Balcarres? and she bound to sit there by night and by day for the rest of her days? You should mind that there's things about, uncanny women of our blood."

I was too much startled at first to recognise that it was of this she was speaking. She was like a figure in a picture, with her pale face the colour of ashes, and the big pattern of the Spanish lace hanging half over it, and her hand held up, with the big diamond blazing at me from the inner corner of her uplifted palm. It was her face that was in surprise, but it looked as if it were raised in malediction; and the diamond threw out darts of light and glared and twinkled at me. If it had been in its right place it would not have mattered, but there, in the open of the hand, I started up, half in terror, half in wrath. And then the old lady laughed, and her hand dropped. "I've wakened you to life, and broke the spell," she said, nodding her old head at me, while the last black silk flowers of the lace were

and threatened. And she took my arm to go down-stairs, laughing and bidding me be steady, and no' tremble and shake like a broken reed. "You should be as steady as a rock at your age. I was like a young tree," she said, leaning so heavily that my willowy girlish frame quivered—"I was a support to virtue, like Pamela, in my time."

"Aunt Mary, Lady Carnbee is a witch!" I cried, when I came back.

"Is that what you think, honey? well: maybe she once was," said Aunt Mary, whom nothing surprised.

And it was that night once more after dinner, and after the post came in, and the 'Times,' that I suddenly saw the Library window again. I had seen it every day—and noticed nothing; but to-night, still in a little tumult of mind over Lady Carnbee and her wicked diamond which wished me harm, and her lace which waved threats and warnings at me, I looked across the street, and there I saw quite plainly the room opposite, far more clear than before. I saw dimly that it must be a large room, and that the big piece of furniture against the wall was a writing-desk. That in a moment, when first my eyes rested upon it, was quite clear: a large old-fashioned *escritoire*, standing out into the room: and I knew by the shape of it that it had a great many pigeon-holes and little drawers in the back, and a large table for writing. There was one just like it in my father's library at home. It was such a surprise to see it all so clearly that I closed my eyes, for the moment almost giddy, wondering how papa's desk could have come here—and then when I reminded myself that this was nonsense, and that there were many such writing-tables besides

papa's, and looked had all become quite distinct as it was: saw nothing but the of which the old lad be certain whether i to avoid the window. it had ever been a v

This occupied r much, and yet I di thing to Aunt Ma thing, I rarely saw in the early part of then that is natu never see into a p side, whether it is t or a looking-glass eyes, or anything mysterious, in the I suppose, somethi the light. But in in June in Scotlan time to see. For yet it is not day, quality in it which scribe, it is so clea object was a reflect

I used to see mor the room as the day: large *escritoire* stood more into the spac times white glim which looked like p it: and once or tw I saw a pile of boo close to the writi they had gilding broken specks, like was always about t the lads in the stree to each other th going home, and shriller voice wou one of the doors, bid to "cry upon the la back to their suppe always the time I sa it was close upon when the veil seem the clear radiance living, and all the s of the street, and A

and looked again — lo ! it all become quite vague and inexact as it was at first ; and I nothing but the blank window, which the old ladies could never ascertain whether it was filled up with the window-tax, or whether it ever been a window at all. It occupied my mind very much, and yet I did not say anything to Aunt Mary. For one I rarely saw anything at all in the early part of the day ; but that is natural : you can see into a place from out-whether it is an empty room looking-glass, or people's or anything else that is curious, in the day. It has, I suppose, something to do with light. But in the evening, when I was in Scotland — then is the time to see. For it is daylight, it is not day, and there is a day in it which I cannot describe, it is so clear, as if every thing was a reflection of itself. I seemed to see more and more of it as the days went on. The escritoire stood out more and more into the space : with some-what white glimmering things, looked like papers, lying on it once or twice I was sure of a pile of books on the floor to the writing-table, as if they had gilding upon them in places, like old books. It was always about the time when the bells in the street began to call each other that they were home, and sometimes a far voice would come from the doors, bidding somebody to come to their suppers. That was the time I saw best, though so close upon the moment the veil seemed to fall and the clear radiance became less and all the sounds died out of the street, and Aunt Mary said

in her soft voice, "Honey ! will you ring for the lamp ?" She said honey as people say darling : and I think it is a prettier word.

Then finally, while I sat one evening with my book in my hand, looking straight across the street, not distracted by anything, I saw a little movement within. It was not any one visible — but everybody must know what it is to see the stir in the air, the little disturbance — you cannot tell what it is, but that it indicates some one there, even though you can see no one. Perhaps it is a shadow making just one flicker in the still place. You may look at an empty room and the furniture in it for hours, and then suddenly there will be the flicker, and you know that something has come into it. It might only be a dog or a cat ; it might be, if that were possible, a bird flying across ; but it is some one, something living, which is so different, so completely different, in a moment from the things that are not living. It seemed to strike quite through me, and I gave a little cry. Then Aunt Mary stirred a little, and put down the huge newspaper that almost covered her from sight, and said, "What is it, honey ?" I cried "Nothing," with a little gasp, quickly, for I did not want to be disturbed just at this moment when somebody was coming ! But I suppose she was not satisfied, for she got up and stood behind to see what it was, putting her hand on my shoulder. It was the softest touch in the world, but I could have flung it off angrily : for that moment everything was still again, and the place grew grey and I saw no more.

"Nothing," I repeated, but I was so vexed I could have cried. "I told you it was nothing, Aunt Mary. Don't you believe me, that

Aunt Mary," I said. "I thought you said—— But how can your sight be as good as ever when you are in doubt about that window? I can see into the room as clear as——" My voice wavered, for I had just looked up and across the street, and I could have sworn that there was no window at all, but only a false image of one painted on the wall.

"Ah!" she said, with a little tone of keenness and of surprise: and she half rose up, throwing down her work hastily, as if she meant to come to me: then, perhaps seeing the bewildered look on my face, she paused and hesitated—"Ay, honey!" she said, "have you got so far ben as that?"

What did she mean? Of course I knew all the old Scotch phrases as well as I knew myself; but it is a comfort to take refuge in a little ignorance, and I know I pretended not to understand whenever I was put out. "I don't know what you mean by 'far ben,'" I cried out, very impatient. I don't know what might have followed, but some one just then came to call, and she could only give me a look before she went forward, putting out her hand to her visitor. It was a very soft look, but anxious, and as if she did not know what to do: and she shook her head a very little, and I thought, though there was a smile on her face, there was something wet about her eyes. I retired into my recess, and nothing more was said.

But it was very tantalising that it should fluctuate so; for sometimes I saw that room quite plain and clear—quite as clear as I could see papa's library, for example, when I shut my eyes. I compared it naturally to my father's study, because of the shape of the writing-table, which,

as I tell you, was his. At times I sat on the table quite as I had seen his papa do. And the little books on the floor—not ranged regularly but put down on other, with all their different ways, and the old gilding shining there. And then at times I saw nothing, and was like the old ladies who cover my head, draw lids together, and as if a window had been shut of the old long-abolished tax, or else that it had no window at all. I was very much at those times to feel that I too put my eyelids and saw not they.

Aunt Mary's old and went day after June went on. I was in July, and I felt to be very unwilling in until I had quite cleared the mystery of that which changed so strangely quite a different thing different people, but eyes at different times I said to myself it had an effect of the light did not quite like that either, but would have pleased to make out it was some superiority made it so clear to only the great superior eyes over old—though quite enough to say it was a superiority with every little like the street. I rather lieve, to think that particular insight

gave clearness to my sight — which was a most impertinent assumption, but really did not mean half the harm it seems to mean when it is put down here in black and white. I had several times again, however, seen the room quite plain, and made out that it was a large room, with a great picture in a dim gilded frame hanging on the farther wall, and many other pieces of solid furniture making a blackness here and there, besides the great escritoire against the wall, which had evidently been placed near the window for the sake of the light.

One thing became visible to me after another, till I almost thought I should end by being able to read the old lettering on one of the big volumes which projected from the others and caught the light; but this was all preliminary to the great event which happened about Midsummer I think the day of St John, which had once so much thought of as a festival, but now means nothing at all in Scotland any more than any other of the saints' days, which I shall always think of with great pity and loss to Scotland whatever Aunt Mary may say.

III.

It was about midsummer, I cannot say exactly to a day when, but near that time, when the great event happened. I had grown very well acquainted by this time with that large dim room. Not only the escritoire, which was very plain to me now, with the papers upon it, and the books at its foot, but the great picture that hung against the farther wall, and various other shadowy pieces of furniture, especially a chair which one evening I saw had been moved into the space before the escritoire, — a little change which made my heart beat, for it spoke so distinctly of some one who must have been there, the same one who had already made me start, two or three times before, by some vague shadow of him or thrill of him which made a sort of movement in the silent space: a movement which made me sure that next minute I must see something or hear something which would explain the whole — if it were not that something always happened outside to stop it, at the very moment of its accomplishment. I had no warning this time of movement or shadow. I had been look-

ing into the room very attentively a little while before, and had looked out everything almost clearer than ever; and then had bent my attention again on my book, and read a chapter or two at a most extraordinary period of the story: and I had quite left St Fergus and the High Street, and the College Library, and was re-creating a South American forest, and was throttled by the flowery creatures and treading softly lest I should put my foot on a scorpion or a dangerous snake. At this moment something suddenly called my attention to the outside. I looked across, and then, with a start, sprang up, for I could not contain myself. I don't know what I said, but enough to start the people in the room, of whom was old Mr Pitmilley. They all looked round upon me and asked what was the matter. When I gave my usual answer, "Nothing," sitting down, I was shamefaced but very much excited. Mr Pitmilley got up and came toward me, and looked out, apparently to see what was the cause. He saw nothing, for he went

one sharper; but it was not as in the time when I sat reading and heard every word, till the story in my book, and the stories they were telling (what they said almost always shaped into stories), were all mingled into each other, and the hero in the novel became somehow the hero (or more likely heroine) of them all. But I took no notice of what they were saying now. And it was not that there was anything very interesting to look at, except the fact that he was there. He did nothing to keep up the absorption of my thoughts. He moved just so much as a man will do when he is very busily writing, thinking of nothing else. There was a faint turn of his head as he went from one side to another of the page he was writing; but it appeared to be a long long page which never wanted turning. Just a little inclination when he was at the end of the line, outward, and then a little inclination inward when he began the next. That was little enough to keep one gazing. But I suppose it was the gradual course of events leading up to this, the finding out of one thing after another as the eyes got accustomed to the vague light: first the room itself, and then the writing-table, and then the other furniture, and last of all the human inhabitant who gave it all meaning. This was all so interesting that it was like a country which one had discovered. And then the extraordinary blindness of the other people who disputed among themselves whether it was a window at all! I did not, I am sure, wish to be disrespectful, and I was very fond of my Aunt Mary, and I liked Mr Pitmilly well enough, and I was afraid of Lady Carnbee. But yet to think of the—I know I ought not to say stupidity—the blind-

ness of them, the foolishness, the insensibility! discussing it as a thing that your eyes could see was a thing to discuss! It would have been unkind to think it was because they were old and the faculties dimmed. It is so easy to think that the faculties grow dim, that such a woman as my Aunt Mary should fail in seeing or hearing, or feeling, that I would not have dwelt on it for a moment it would have seemed so cruel. And then such a clever old lady as Lady Carnbee, who could see through a millstone, people said, and Mr Pitmilly, such an old man of the world. It did indeed bring tears to my eyes to think that all those clever people, solely for reason of being no longer young as I was, should have the simple things shut out from them; and all their wisdom and their knowledge be unable to see what a girl like me could see so easily. I was too much grieved for them to dwell upon that thought, and I was ashamed, though perhaps I was proud too, to be so much better off than they.

All those thoughts flitted through my mind as I sat and gazed across the street. And I felt there was so much going on in that room across the street! He was absorbed in his writing, never looked up, never paused for a word, never turned round in his chair, or got up and walked about the room as my father did. Perhaps is a great writer, everybody says; but he would have come to the window and looked out, he would have drummed with his fingers on the pane, he would have watched a fly and helped it over a difficulty and played with the fringe of the curtain, and done a dozen other nice, pleasant, foolish things, the next sentence took shape. "My dear, I am waiting for

word," he would say to my mother when she looked at him, with a question why he was so idle, in her eyes; and then he would laugh, and go back again to his writing-table. But He over there never stopped at all. It was like a fascination. I could not take my eyes from him and that little scarcely perceptible movement he made, turning his head. I trembled with impatience to see him turn the page, or perhaps throw down his finished sheet on the floor, as somebody looking into a window like me once saw Sir Walter do, sheet after sheet. I should have cried out if this Unknown had done that. I should not have been able to help myself, whoever had been present; and gradually I got into such a state of suspense waiting for it to be done that my head grew hot and my hands cold. And then, just when there was a little movement of his elbow, as if he were about to do this, to be called away by Aunt Mary to see Lady Carnbee to the door! I believe I did not hear her till she had called me three times, and then I stumbled up, all flushed and hot, and nearly crying. When I came out from the recess to give the old lady my arm (Mr Pitmilly had gone away some time before), she put up her hand and stroked my cheek. "What ails the bairn?" she said; "she's fevered. You must not let her sit her lane in the window, Mary Balcarrea. You and me know what comes of that." Her old fingers had a strange touch, cold like something not living, and I felt that dreadful diamond sting me on the cheek.

I do not say that this was not just a part of my excitement and suspense; and I know it is enough to make any one laugh when the excitement was all about an un-

known man writing the other side of the impatience because to an end of the I think I was not quit of this as any one could worst was that this lady felt my heart in her arm that was "You are just in a d to me, with her old my ear as we wen "I don't know who it's bound to be so not worth it. If you would think of

"I am thinking said, half crying. " kind and dreadful of Lady Carnbee. I ne —any man, in a cried in a passion The old lady clung arm, and pressed it kindly.

"Poor little bi "how it's strugglin' I'm not saying I more dangerous wh a dream."

She was not at al I was very angry ar would scarcely shak hand which she p from her carriage v had helped her in. with her, and I was diamond, which lo under her finger through and thro whether you believ am certain that it —a sharp malign full of meaning! gloves, but only b tens, through which diamond gleamed.

I ran up-stairs — the last to go — ar too had gone to get ner, for it was late. my place, and look

[Jan.

an writing in a room on side of the way, and my e because he never came d of the page. If you as not quite as well aware any one could be! but the s that this dreadful old my heart beating against that was within mine. just in a dream," she said th her old voice close at us we went down-stairs. know who it is about, but to be some man that is n it. If you were wise I think of him no more." thinking of no man!" I crying. "It is very un-dreadful of you to say so, abee. I never thought of man, in all my life!" I a passion of indignation. ady clung tighter to my pressed it to her, not un-

little bird," she said, strugglin' and flutterin'! saying but what it's gerous when it's all for

s not at all unkind; but y angry and excited, and reely shake that old pale ich she put out to me carriage window when I d her in. I was angry and I was afraid of the which looked up from r finger as if it saw and through me; and you believe me or not, I n that it stung me again p malignant prick, oh aning! She never wore it only black lace mit-ough which that horrible gleamed.

ap-stairs — she had been to go—and Aunt Mary one to get ready for din- was late. I hurried to and looked across, with

1896.]

A Story of the Seen and

my heart beating more than ever. I made quite sure I should see the finished sheet lying white upon the floor. But what I gazed at was only the dim blank of that window which they said was no window. The light had changed in some wonderful way during that five minutes I had been gone, and there was nothing, nothing, not a reflection, not a glimmer. It looked exactly as they all said, the blank form of a window painted on the wall. It was too much: I sat down in my excitement and cried as if my heart would break. I felt that they had done something to it, that it was not natural, that I could not bear their unkindness — even Aunt Mary. They thought it not good for me! not good for me! and they had done something—even Aunt Mary herself—and that wicked diamond that hid itself in Lady Carnbee's hand. Of course I knew all this was ridiculous as well as you could tell me; but I was exasperated by the disappointment and the sudden stop to all my excited feelings, and I could not bear it. It was more strong than I.

I was late for dinner, and naturally there were some traces in my eyes that I had been crying when I came into the full light in the dining-room, where Aunt Mary could look at me at her pleasure, and I could not run away. She said, "Honey, you have been shedding tears. I'm loth, loth that a bairn of your mother's should be made to shed tears in my house."

"I have not been made to shed tears," cried I; and then, to save myself another fit of crying, I burst out laughing and said, "I am afraid of that dreadful diamond on old Lady Carnbee's hand. It bites—I am sure it bites! Aunt Mary, look here."

"You foolish lassie," Aunt

Mary
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is n
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"
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and think—perhaps of nothing at all? Papa always says he is thinking of nothing at all. He says things blow through his mind as if the doors were open, and he has no responsibility. What sort of things were blowing through this man's mind? or was he thinking, still thinking, of what he had been writing and going on with it still? The thing that troubled me most was that I could not make out his face. It is very difficult to do so when you see a person only through two windows, your own and his. I wanted very much to recognise him afterwards if I should chance to meet him in the street. If he had only stood up and moved about the room, I should have made out the rest of his figure, and then I should have known him again; or if he had only come to the window (as papa always did), then I should have seen his face clearly enough to have recognised him. But, to be sure, he did not see any need to do anything in order that I might recognise him, for he did not know I existed; and probably if he had known I was watching him, he would have been annoyed and gone away.

But he was as immovable there facing the window as he had been seated at the desk. Sometimes he made a little faint stir with a hand or a foot, and I held my breath, hoping he was about to rise from his chair—but he never did it. And with all the efforts I made I could not be sure of his face. I puckered my eyelids together as old Miss Jeanie did who was shortsighted, and I put my hands on each side of my face to concentrate the light on him: but it was all in vain. Either the face changed as I sat staring, or else it was the light that was not good enough, or I don't know what it was. His hair seemed to

me light—certainly there was no dark line about his head, as there would have been had it been very dark—and I saw, where it came across the old gilt frame on the wall behind, that it must be fair: and I am almost sure he had no beard. Indeed I am sure that he had no beard, for the outline of his face was distinct enough; and the daylight was still quite clear out of doors, so that I recognised perfectly a baker's boy who was on the pavement opposite, and whom I should have known again whenever I had met him: as if it was of the least importance to recognise a baker's boy! There was one thing, however, rather curious about this boy. He had been throwing stones at somebody. In St Rule's have a great way of throwing stones at each other, and I suppose there had been a battle. I suppose also that he had one at his hand left over from the and his roving eye took in incidents of the street where he could throw it to effect and mischief. But evidently he found nothing in it in the street, for he turned round with a his leg to show his cle aimed it straight at I remarked without that it struck with a and without any break and fell straight down pavement. But I of this even in momentarily was I watching within, which moved the slightest notice just as dimly clear seen, yet as indicated before. And then to fail a little, no prospect within less distinct than Then I jump

Mary's hand upon my shoulder. "Honey," she said, "I asked you twice to ring the bell; but you did not hear me."

"Oh, Aunt Mary!" I cried in great penitence, but turning again to the window in spite of myself.

"You must come away from there: you must come away from there," she said, almost as if she were angry: and then her soft voice grew softer, and she gave me a kiss: "never mind about the lamp, honey; I have rung myself, and it is coming; but, silly bairn, you must not aye be dreaming—your little head will turn."

All the answer I made, for I could scarcely speak, was to give a little wave with my hand to the window on the other side of the street.

She stood there patting me

softly on the shoulder for a whole minute or more, murmuring something that sounded like, "She must go away, she must go away." Then she said, always with her hand soft on my shoulder, "Like a dream when one awaketh." And when I looked again, I saw the blank of an opaque surface and nothing more.

Aunt Mary asked me no more questions. She made me come into the room and sit in the light and read something to her. But I did not know what I was reading, for there suddenly came into my mind and took possession of it, the thud of the stone upon the window, and its descent straight down, as if from some hard substance that threw it off: though I had myself seen it strike upon the glass of the panes across the way.

IV.

I am afraid I continued in a state of great exaltation and commotion of mind for some time. I used to hurry through the day till the evening came, when I could watch my neighbour through the window opposite. I did not talk much to any one, and I never said a word about my own questions and wonderings. I wondered who he was, what he was doing, and why he never came till the evening (or very rarely); and I also wondered much to what house the room belonged in which he sat. It seemed to form a portion of the old College Library, as I have often said. The window was one of the line of windows which I understood lighted the large hall; but whether this room belonged to the library itself, or how its occupant gained access to it, I could not tell. I made up my mind that it must open out

of the hall, and that the gentleman must be the Librarian or one of his assistants, perhaps kept busy all the day in his official duties, and only able to get to his desk and do his own private work in the evening. One has heard of so many things like that—a man who had to take up some other kind of work for his living, and then when his leisure-time came, gave it all up to something he really loved—some study or some book he was writing. My father himself at one time had been like that. He had been in the Treasury all day, and then in the evening wrote his books, which made him famous. His daughter, however little she might know of other things, could not but know that! But it discouraged me very much when somebody pointed out to me one day in the street an old gentleman who wore a wig

The Library Window:

nd took a great deal of snuff, and said, That's the Librarian of the old College. It gave me a great shock for a moment; but then I remembered that an old gentleman has generally assistants, and that it must be one of them.

Gradually I became quite sure of this. There was another small window above, which twinkled very much when the sun shone, and looked a very kindly bright little window, above that dulness of the other which hid so much. I made up my mind this was the window of his other room, and that these two chambers at the end of the beautiful hall were really beautiful for him to live in, so near all the books, and so retired and quiet, that nobody knew of them. What a fine thing for him! and you could see what use he made of his good fortune as he sat there, so constant at his writing for hours together. Was it a book he was writing, or could it be perhaps Poems? This was a thought which made my heart beat; but I concluded with much regret that it could not be Poems, because no one could possibly write Poems like that, straight off, without pausing for a word or a rhyme. Had they been Poems he must have risen up, he must have paced about the room or come to the window as papa did—not that papa wrote Poems: he always said, "I am not worthy even to speak of such prevailing mysteries," shaking his head—which gave me a wonderful admiration and almost awe of a Poet, who was thus much greater even than papa. But I could not believe that a poet could have kept still for hours and hours like that. What could it be then? perhaps it was history; that is a great thing to work at, but you would not perhaps need to move nor to

stride up and down, or look upon the sky and the world in the light.

He did move now and then, however, though he never came to the window. Sometimes I have said, he would turn round from his chair and turn his head towards it, and sit there for some time musing when the light began to fail, and the world was full of that strange day when it was night, that light with which our world is now so full, in which everything is clearly visible, and there are no shadows. "It was between night and the day, when the sun and the moon have power." This was the after-light of the wonderful long summer evening, the time without shadows. It had been in it, and sometimes it was so bright that I was afraid: and all manner of thoughts seemed to come into my mind. I always felt that if only I had a little more vision in our world, I might see beautiful folk about in it, who were not in our world. I thought most of the people there looking out: and my heart expand with a curious sensation, as if I could see that, though I could not go there, did, and did not ever come to the window, sitting close in the deep recess, with my eye almost seeing through his eyes.

I was so much absorbed in my thoughts and in every evening—for I had missed an evening, there—that people would mark that I was looking that I could not take any attention when I was alone, and did not go out, nor to join the others at tennis, nor to do what others did; and

Mary that I was quickly losing all the ground I had gained, and that she could never send me back to my mother with a white face like that. Aunt Mary had begun to look at me anxiously for some time before that, and, I am sure, held secret consultations over me, sometimes with the doctor, and sometimes with her old ladies, who thought they knew more about young girls than even the doctors. And I could hear them saying to her that I wanted diversion, that I must be diverted, and that she must take me out more, and give a party, and that when the summer visitors began to come there would perhaps be a ball or two, or Lady Carnbee would get up a picnic. "And there's my young lord coming home," said the old lady whom they called Miss Jeanie, "and I never knew the young lassie yet that would not cock up her bonnet at the sight of a young lord."

But Aunt Mary shook her head. "I would not lippen much to the young lord," she said. "His mother is sore set upon siller for him; and my poor bit honey has no fortune to speak of. No, we must not fly so high as the young lord; but I will gladly take her about the country to see the old castles and towers. It will perhaps rouse her up a little."

"And if that does not answer we must think of something else," the old lady said.

I heard them perhaps that day because they were talking of me, which is always so effective a way of making you hear—for latterly I had not been paying any attention to what they were saying; and I thought to myself how little they knew, and how little I cared about even the old castles and curious houses, having something else in my mind. But just about that

time Mr Pitmilley came in, who was always a friend to me, and, when he heard them talking, he managed to stop them and turn the conversation into another channel. And after a while, when the ladies were gone away, he came up to my recess, and gave a glance right over my head. And then he asked my Aunt Mary if ever she had settled her question about the window opposite, "that you thought was a window sometimes, and then not a window, and many curious things," the old gentleman said.

My Aunt Mary gave me another very wistful look; and then she said, "Indeed, Mr Pitmilley, we are just where we were, and I am quite as unsettled as ever; and I think my niece she has taken up my views, for I see her many a time looking across and wondering, and I am not clear now what her opinion is."

"My opinion!" I said, "Aunt Mary." I could not help being a little scornful, as one is when one is very young. "I have no opinion. There is not only a window but there is a room, and I could show you——" I was going to say, "show you the gentleman who sits and writes in it," but I stopped, not knowing what they might say, and looked from one to another. "I could tell you—all the furniture that is in it," I said. And then I felt something like a flame that went over my face, and that all at once my cheeks were burning. I thought they gave a little glance at each other, but that may have been folly. "There is a great picture, in a big dim frame," I said, feeling a little breathless, "on the wall opposite the window——"

"Is there so?" said Mr Pitmilley, with a little laugh. And he said, "Now I will tell you what we'll

do. You know that there is a conversation party, or whatever they call it, in the big room to-night, and it will be all open and lighted up. And it is a handsome room, and two-three things well worth looking at. I will just step along after we have all got our dinner, and take you over to the party, madam—Missy and you——”

“Dear me!” said Aunt Mary. “I have not gone to a party for more years than I would like to say—and never once to the Library Hall.” Then she gave a little shiver, and said quite low, “I could not go there.”

“Then you will just begin again to-night, madam,” said Mr Pitmilly, taking no notice of this, “and a proud man will I be leading in Mistress Balcarres that was once the pride of the ball.”

“Ah, once!” said Aunt Mary, with a low little laugh and then a sigh. “And we’ll not say how long ago;” and after that she made a pause, looking always at me: and then she said, “I accept your offer, and we’ll put on our bows; and I hope you will have no occasion to think shame of us. But why not take your dinner here?”

That was how it was settled, and the old gentleman went away to dress, looking quite pleased. But I came to Aunt Mary as soon as he was gone, and besought her not to make me go. “I like the long bonnie night and the light that lasts so long. And I cannot bear to dress up and go out, wasting it all in a stupid party. I hate parties, Aunt Mary!” I cried, “and I would far rather stay here.”

“My honey,” she said, taking both my hands, “I know it will maybe be a blow to you,—but it’s better so.”

“How could it be a blow to

me!” I cried rather not.

“You’ll just this on go out. You one night, just honey sweet.”

I am sure Aunt Mary’ me between nothing more how I grud mere party, all the Colle nobody to me stead of my window and and the dim kept me wor what was he he looking fo wonder and through the ing night!

It occurred I was dressi sure that I solitude to might perhap be there. A that, I took though Janet one—and my which I had to wear. Th pearls, but t and very eve they were s did not thi pearance the been someth as I was bu moment, wit and my pear hair all sha was pleasant old Mr Pitmi in his eyes, pleased but thinking me have trouble I was so yc

not. And when Aunt Mary looked at me, there was a little quiver about her mouth. She herself had on her pretty lace and her white hair very nicely done, and looking her best. As for Mr Pitmilley, he had a beautiful fine French cambric frill to his shirt, plaited in the most minute plaits, and with a diamond pin in it which sparkled as much as Lady Carnbee's ring; but this was a fine frank kindly stone, that looked you straight in the face and sparkled, with the light dancing in it as if it were pleased to see you, and to be shining on that old gentleman's honest and faithful breast: for he had been one of Aunt Mary's lovers in their early days, and still thought there was nobody like her in the world.

I had got into quite a happy commotion of mind by the time we set out across the street in the soft light of the evening to the Library Hall. Perhaps, after all, I should see him, and see the room which I was so well acquainted with, and find out why he sat there so constantly and never was seen abroad. I thought I might even hear what he was working at, which would be such a pleasant thing to tell papa when I went home. A friend of mine at St Rule's—oh, far, far more busy than you ever were, papa!—and then my father would laugh as he always did, and say he was but an idler and never busy at all.

The room was all light and bright, flowers wherever flowers could be, and the long lines of the books that went along the walls on each side, lighting up wherever there was a line of gilding or an ornament, with a little response. It dazzled me at first all that light: but I was very eager, though I kept very quiet, looking round to see if perhaps

in any corner, in the middle of any group, he would be there. I did not expect to see him among the ladies. He would not be with them,—he was too studious, too silent: but perhaps among that circle of grey heads at the upper end of the room—perhaps—

No: I am not sure that it was not half a pleasure to me to make quite sure that there was not one whom I could take for him, who was at all like my vague image of him. No: it was absurd to think that he would be here, amid all that sound of voices, under the glare of that light. I felt a little proud to think that he was in his room as usual, doing his work, or thinking so deeply over it, as when he turned round in his chair with his face to the light.

I was thus getting a little composed and quiet in my mind, for now that the expectation of seeing him was over, though it was a disappointment, it was a satisfaction too—when Mr Pitmilley came up to me, holding out his arm. "Now," he said, "I am going to take you to see the curiosities." I thought to myself that after I had seen them and spoken to everybody I knew, Aunt Mary would let me go home, so I went very willingly, though I did not care for the curiosities. Something, however, struck me strangely as we walked up the room. It was the air, rather fresh and strong, from an open window at the east end of the hall. How should there be a window there? I hardly saw what it meant for the first moment, but it blew in my face as if there was some meaning in it, and I felt very uneasy without seeing why.

Then there was another thing that startled me. On that side of the wall which was to the street there seemed no windows at all. A long line of bookcases filled it

from end to end. I could not see what that meant either, but it confused me. I was altogether confused. I felt as if I was in a strange country, not knowing where I was going, not knowing what I might find out next. If there were no windows on the wall to the street, where was my window? My heart, which had been jumping up and calming down again all the time, gave a great leap at this, as if it would have come out of me—but I did not know what it could mean.

Then we stopped before a glass case, and Mr Pitmilley showed me some things in it. I could not pay much attention to them. My head was going round and round. I heard his voice going on, and then myself speaking with a queer sound that was hollow in my ears; but I did not know what I was saying or what he was saying. Then he took me to the very end of the room, the east end, saying something that I caught—that I was pale, that the air would do me good. The air was blowing full on me, lifting the lace of my dress, lifting my hair, almost chilly. The window opened into the pale daylight, into the little lane that ran by the end of the building. Mr Pitmilley went on talking, but I could not make out a word he said. Then I heard my own voice speaking through it, though I did not seem to be aware that I was speaking. "Where is my window?—where, then, is my window?" I seemed to be saying, and I turned right round, dragging him with me, still holding his arm. As I did this my eye fell upon something at last which I knew. It was a large picture in a broad frame, hanging against the farther wall.

What did it mean? Oh, what did it mean? I turned round

again to the open window at the east end, and to the daylight, the strange light without any shadow, that was all round about this lighted hall, holding it like a bubble that would burst, like something that was not real. The real place was the room I knew, in which that picture was hanging, where the writing-table was, and where he sat with his face to the light. But where was the light and the window through which it came? I think my senses must have left me. I went up to the picture which I knew, and then I walked straight across the room, always dragging Mr Pitmilley, whose face was pale, but who did not struggle but allowed me to lead him, straight across to where the window was—where the window was not;—where there was no sign of it. "Where is my window?—where is my window?" I said. And all the time I was sure that I was in a dream, and these lights were all some theatrical illusions and the people talking; and being real but the pale, pale, lingering day standing wait until that foolish bubble should burst.

"My dear," said Mr P
"my dear! Mind that you
public. Mind where you
You must not make an
and frighten your Aunt
Come away with me. Come
my dear young lady!
take a seat for a minute
compose yourself; and
an ice or a little wine.
patting my hand, with
his arm, and looking
anxiously. "Bless me,
I never thought it would
effect," he said.

But I would not
take me away in
I went to the picture
looked at it witho

then I went across the room again, with some kind of wild thought that if I insisted I should find it. "My window—my window!" I said.

There was one of the professors standing there, and he heard me. "The window!" said he. "Ah, you've been taken in with what appears outside. It was put there to be in uniformity with the window on the stair. But it never

was a real window. It is just behind that bookcase. Many people are taken in by it," he said.

His voice seemed to sound from somewhere far away, and as if it would go on for ever; and the hall swam in a dazzle of shining and of noises round me; and the daylight through the open window grew greyer, waiting till it should be over, and the bubble burst.

V.

It was Mr Pitmilley who took me home; or rather it was I who took him, pushing him on a little in front of me, holding fast by his arm, not waiting for Aunt Mary or any one. We came out into the daylight again outside, I, without even a cloak or a shawl, with my bare arms, and uncovered head, and the pearls round my neck. There was a rush of the people about, and a baker's boy, that baker's boy, stood right in my way and cried, "Here's a braw ane!" shouting to the others: the words struck me somehow, as his stone had struck the window, without any reason. But I did not mind the people staring, and hurried across the street, with Mr Pitmilley half a step in advance. The door was open, and Janet standing at it, looking out to see what she could see of the ladies in their grand dresses. She gave a shriek when she saw me hurrying across the street; but I brushed past her, and pushed Mr Pitmilley up the stairs, and took him breathless to the recess, where I threw myself down on the seat, feeling as if I could not have gone another step farther, and waved my hand across to the window. "There! there!" I cried. Ah! there it was—not that senseless mob—not the theatre and the gas, and the people

all in a murmur and clang of talking. Never in all these days had I seen that room so clearly. There was a faint tone of light behind, as if it might have been a reflection from some of those vulgar lights in the hall, and he sat against it, calm, wrapped in his thoughts, with his face turned to the window. Nobody but must have seen him. Janet could have seen him had I called her up-stairs. It was like a picture, all the things I knew, and the same attitude, and the atmosphere, full of quietness, not disturbed by anything. I pulled Mr Pitmilley's arm before I let him go,—“You see, you see!” I cried. He gave me the most bewildered look, as if he would have liked to cry. He saw nothing! I was sure of that from his eyes. He was an old man, and there was no vision in him. If I had called up Janet, she would have seen it all. “My dear!” he said. “My dear!” waving his hands in a helpless way.

“He has been there all these nights,” I cried, “and I thought you could tell me who he was and what he was doing; and that he might have taken me in to that room, and showed me, that I might tell papa. Papa would understand, he would like to hear. Oh, can't you tell me what work he is doing,

Mr Pitmilley? He never lifts his head as long as the light throws a shadow, and then when it is like this he turns round and thinks, and takes a rest!"

Mr. Pitmilley was trembling, whether it was with cold or I know not what. He said, with a shake in his voice, "My dear young lady—my dear——" and then stopped and looked at me as if he were going to cry. "It's peetiful, it's peetiful," he said; and then in another voice, "I am going across there again to bring your Aunt Mary home; do you understand, my poor little thing, my—— I am going to bring her home—you will be better when she is here." I was glad when he went away, as he could not see anything: and I sat alone in the dark which was not dark, but quite clear light—a light like nothing I ever saw. How clear it was in that room! not glaring like the gas and the voices, but so quiet, everything so visible, as if it were in another world. I heard a little rustle behind me, and there was Janet, standing staring at me with two big eyes wide open. She was only a little older than I was. I called to her, "Janet, come here, come here, and you will see him,—come here and see him!" impatient that she should be so shy and keep behind. "Oh, my bonnie young leddy!" she said, and burst out crying. I stamped my foot at her, in my indignation that she would not come, and she fled before me with a rustle and swing of haste, as if she were afraid. None of them, none of them! not even a girl like myself, with the sight in her eyes, would understand. I turned back again, and held out my hands to him sitting there, who was the only one that knew. "Oh," I said, "say something to me! I don't

know who you are: but you're and I only—feeling something to me! that he would any answer. I with the street his window shutting of the people standing one moment it there was only whole world.

But I gasped that had almost when I saw him. He had heard not how. He rose too, speaking anything but movement. He made me as if I were his will. He came to the window, and stared at me. I was staring at me. At last at last he looked at somebody, though watching him believing in trouble and and trembling keep on kneeling or reporting my feeling as if drawn out scribe his yet there think it not and as if he looked fair, and about his hands and it. It was but at a sound in the street. it, and me, I

ing with my face against the glass, drawn to him as if I could have gone out of myself, my heart out of my bosom, my eyes out of my head. He opened the window with a noise that was heard from the West Port to the Abbey. Could any one doubt that?

And then he leaned forward out of the window, looking out. There was not one in the street but must have seen him. He looked at me first, with a little wave of his hand, as if it were a salutation—yet not exactly that either, for I thought he waved me away; and then he looked up and down in the dim shining of the ending day, first to the east, to the old Abbey towers, and then to the west, along the broad line of the street where so many people were coming and going, but so little noise, all like enchanted folk in an enchanted place. I watched him with such a melting heart, with such a deep satisfaction as words could not say; for nobody could tell me now that he was not there,—nobody could say I was dreaming any more. I watched him as if I could not breathe—my heart in my throat, my eyes upon him. He looked up and down, and then he looked back to me. I was the first, and I was the last, though it was not for long: he did know, he did see, who it was that had recognised him and sympathised with him all the time. I was in a kind of rapture, yet stupor too; my look went with his look, following it as if I were his shadow; and then suddenly he was gone, and I saw him no more.

I dropped back again upon my seat, seeking something to support me, something to lean upon. He had lifted his hand and waved it once again to me. How he went I cannot tell, nor where he went

I cannot tell; but in a moment he was away, and the window standing open, and the room fading into stillness and dimness, yet so clear, with all its space, and the great picture in its gilded frame upon the wall. It gave me no pain to see him go away. My heart was so content, and I was so worn out and satisfied—for what doubt or question could there be about him now? As I was lying back as weak as water, Aunt Mary came in behind me, and flew to me with a little rustle as if she had come on wings, and put her arms round me, and drew my head on to her breast. I had begun to cry a little, with sobs like a child. "You saw him, you saw him!" I said. To lean upon her, and feel her so soft, so kind, gave me a pleasure I cannot describe, and her arms round me, and her voice saying "Honey, my honey!"—as if she were nearly crying too. Lying there I came back to myself, quite sweetly, glad of everything. But I wanted some assurance from them that they had seen him too. I waved my hand to the window that was still standing open, and the room that was stealing away into the faint dark. "This time you saw it all?" I said, getting more eager. "My honey!" said Aunt Mary, giving me a kiss: and Mr Pitmilley began to walk about the room with short little steps behind, as if he were out of patience. I sat straight up and put away Aunt Mary's arms. "You cannot be so blind, so blind!" I cried. "Oh, not to-night, at least not to-night!" But neither the one nor the other made any reply. I shook myself quite free, and raised myself up. And there, in the middle of the street, stood the baker's boy like a statue, staring up at the open window, with his

mouth open and his face full of wonder—breathless, as if he could not believe what he saw. I darted forward, calling to him, and beckoned him to come to me. "Oh, bring him up! bring him, bring him to me!" I cried.

Mr Pitmilley went out directly, and got the boy by the shoulder. He did not want to come. It was strange to see the little old gentleman, with his beautiful frill and his diamond pin, standing out in the street, with his hand upon the boy's shoulder, and the other boys round, all in a little crowd. And presently they came towards the house, the others all following, gaping and wondering. He came in unwilling, almost resisting, looking as if we meant him some harm. "Come away, my laddie, come and speak to the young lady," Mr Pitmilley was saying. And Aunt Mary took my hands to keep me back. But I would not be kept back.

"Boy," I cried, "you saw it too: you saw it: tell them you saw it! It is that I want, and no more."

He looked at me as they all did, as if he thought I was mad. "What's she wantin' wi' me?" he said; and then, "I did nae harm, even if I did throw a bit stane at it—and it's nae sin to throw a stane."

"You rascal!" said Mr Pitmilley, giving him a shake; "have you been throwing stones? You'll kill somebody some of these days with your stones." The old gentleman was confused and troubled, for he did not understand what I wanted, nor anything that had happened. And then Aunt Mary, holding my hands and drawing me close to her, spoke. "Laddie," she said, "answer the young lady, like a good lad. There's no in-

tention of finding fault with you. Answer her, my man, and then Janet will give ye your supper before you go."

"Oh speak, speak!" I cried; "answer them and tell them! you saw that window opened, and the gentleman look out and wave his hand?"

"I saw nae gentleman," he said, with his head down, "except this wee gentleman here."

"Listen, laddie," said Aunt Mary. "I saw ye standing in the middle of the street staring. What were ye looking at?"

"It was naething to make a wark about. It was just yon windy yonder in the library that is nae windy. And it was open—as sure's death. You may laugh if you like. Is that a' she's wantin' wi' me?"

"You are telling a pack of lies, laddie," Mr Pitmilley said.

"I'm tellin' nae lees—it was standin' open just like ony ither windy. It's as sure's death. I couldna believe it myself; but it's true."

"And there it is," I cried, turning round and pointing it to them with great triumph in heart. But the light was all it had faded, it had changed. window was just as it had been, a sombre break upon wall.

I was treated like an inv that evening, and taken u to bed, and Aunt Mary sa my room the whole night. Whenever I opened my was always sitting ther me, watching. And t' was in all my life s night. When I would excitement, she kisse hushed me like a c honey, you are not th she said. "Oh w!

bairn! I should never have let you be there!"

"Aunt Mary, Aunt Mary, you have seen him too?"

"Oh whisht, whisht, honey!" Aunt Mary said: her eyes were shining—there were tears in them. "Oh whisht, whisht! Put it out of your mind, and try to sleep. I will not speak another word," she cried.

But I had my arms round her, and my mouth at her ear. "Who is he there?—tell me that and I will ask no more——"

"Oh honey, rest, and try to sleep! It is just—how can I tell you?—a dream, a dream! Did you not hear what Lady Carnbee said?—the women of our blood——"

"What? what? Aunt Mary, oh Aunt Mary——"

"I canna tell you," she cried in her agitation, "I canna tell you! How can I tell you, when I know just what you know and no more? It is a longing all your life after—it is a looking—for what never comes."

"He will come," I cried. "I shall see him to-morrow—that I know, I know!"

She kissed me and cried over me, her cheek hot and wet like mine. "My honey, try if you can sleep—try if you can sleep: and we'll wait to see what to-morrow brings."

"I have no fear," said I; and then I suppose, though it is strange to think of, I must have fallen asleep—I was so worn-out, and young, and not used to lying in my bed awake. From time to time I opened my eyes, and sometimes jumped up remembering everything: but Aunt Mary was always there to soothe me, and I lay down again in her shelter like a bird in its nest.

But I would not let them keep

me in bed next day. I was in a kind of fever, not knowing what I did. The window was quite opaque, without the least glimmer in it, flat and blank like a piece of wood. Never from the first day had I seen it so little like a window. "It cannot be wondered at," I said to myself, "that seeing it like that, and with eyes that are old, not so clear as mine, they should think what they do." And then I smiled to myself to think of the evening and the long light, and whether he would look out again, or only give me a signal with his hand. I decided I would like that best: not that he should take the trouble to come forward and open it again, but just a turn of his head and a wave of his hand. It would be more friendly and show more confidence,—not as if I wanted that kind of demonstration every night.

I did not come down in the afternoon, but kept at my own window up-stairs alone, till the tea-party should be over. I could hear them making a great talk; and I was sure they were all in the recess staring at the window, and laughing at the silly lassie. Let them laugh! I felt above all that now. At dinner I was very restless, hurrying to get it over; and I think Aunt Mary was restless too. I doubt whether she read her 'Times' when it came; she opened it up so as to shield her, and watched from a corner. And I settled myself in the recess, with my heart full of expectation. I wanted nothing more than to see him writing at his table, and to turn his head and give me a little wave of his hand, just to show that he knew I was there. I sat from half-past seven o'clock to ten o'clock: and the daylight grew

softer and softer, till at last it was as if it was shining through a pearl, and not a shadow to be seen. But the window all the time was as black as night, and there was nothing, nothing there.

Well : but other nights it had been like that ; he would not be there every night only to please me. There are other things in a man's life, a great learned man like that. I said to myself I was not disappointed. Why should I be disappointed ? There had been other nights when he was not there. Aunt Mary watched me, every movement I made, her eyes shining, often wet, with a pity in them that almost made me cry : but I felt as if I were more sorry for her than for myself. And then I flung myself upon her, and asked her, again and again, what it was, and who it was, imploring her to tell me if she knew ! and when she had seen him, and what had happened ? and what it meant about the women of our blood ! She told me that how it was she could not tell, nor when : it was just at the time it had to be ; and that we all saw him in our time—"that is," she said, "the ones that are like you and me." What was it that made her and me different from the rest ? but she only shook her head and would not tell me. "They say," she said, and then stopped short. "Oh, honey, try and forget all about it—if I had but known you were of that kind ! They say—that once there was one that was a Scholar, and liked his books more than any lady's love. Honey, do not look at me like that. To think I should have brought all this on you !"

"He was a Scholar !" I cried.

"And one of us, that must have been a light woman, not like you and me—— But maybe it was just

in innocence ; for who can tell ! She waved to him and waved to him to come over : and yon ring was the token : but he would not come. But still she sat at her window and waved and waved—till at last her brothers heard of it, that were stirring men ; and then——oh, my honey, let us speak of it no more !"

"They killed him !" I cried, carried away. And then I grasped her with my hands, and gave her a shake, and flung away from her. "You tell me that to throw dust in my eyes—when I saw him only last night : and he as living as I am, and as young !"

"My honey, my honey !" Aunt Mary said.

After that I would not speak to her for a long time ; but she kept close to me, never leaving me when she could help it, and always with that pity in her eyes. For the next night it was the same ; and the third night. That third night I thought I could not bear any longer. I would have to something—if only I knew what to do ! If it would ever dark, quite dark, there might something to be done. I had dreams of stealing out of the and getting a ladder, and rising up to try if I could not that window, in the middle night—if perhaps I could baker's boy to help me ; my mind got into a whirl, was as if I had done it ; and almost see the boy put to the window, and he out that there was no Oh, how slow it was and how light it was thing so clear—no cover you, no shadow one side of the street other side ! I or though I was for

And in the deep midnight, when it is dark dark in every other place, I slipped very softly down-stairs, though there was one board on the landing-place that creaked—and opened the door and stepped out. There was not a soul to be seen, up or down, from the Abbey to the West Port: and the trees stood like ghosts, and the silence was terrible, and everything as clear as day. You don't know what silence is till you find it in the light like that, not morning but night, no sunrising, no shadow, but everything as clear as the day.

It did not make any difference as the slow minutes went on: one o'clock, two o'clock. How strange it was to hear the clocks striking in that dead light when there was nobody to hear them! But it made no difference. The window was quite blank; even the marking of the panes seemed to have melted away. I stole up again after a long time, through the silent house, in the clear light, cold and trembling, with despair in my heart.

I am sure Aunt Mary must have watched and seen me coming back, for after a while I heard faint sounds in the house; and very early, when there had come a little sunshine into the air, she came to my bedside with a cup of tea in her hand; and she, too, was looking like a ghost. "Are you warm, honey—are you comfortable?" she said. "It doesn't matter," said I. I did not feel as if anything mattered; unless if one could get into the dark somewhere—the soft, deep dark that would cover you over and hide you—but I could not tell from what. The dreadful thing was that there was nothing, nothing to look for, nothing to hide from—only the silence and the light.

That day my mother came and took me home. I had not heard she was coming; she arrived quite unexpectedly, and said she had no time to stay, but must start the same evening so as to be in London next day, papa having settled to go abroad. At first I had a wild thought I would not go. But how can a girl say I will not, when her mother has come for her, and there is no reason, no reason in the world, to resist, and no right! I had to go, whatever I might wish or any one might say. Aunt Mary's dear eyes were wet; she went about the house drying them quietly with her handkerchief, but she always said, "It is the best thing for you, honey—the best thing for you!" Oh, how I hated to hear it said that it was the best thing, as if anything mattered, one more than another! The old ladies were all there in the afternoon, Lady Carnbee looking at me from under her black lace, and the diamond lurking, sending out darts from under her finger. She patted me on the shoulder, and told me to be a good bairn. "And never lippen to what you see from the window," she said. "The eye is deceitful as well as the heart." She kept patting me on the shoulder, and I felt again as if that sharp wicked stone stung me. Was that what Aunt Mary meant when she said yon ring was the token? I thought afterwards I saw the mark on my shoulder. You will say why? How can I tell why? If I had known, I should have been contented, and it would not have mattered any more.

I never went back to St Rule's, and for years of my life I never again looked out of a window when any other window was in sight. You ask me did I ever see

him again? I cannot tell: the imagination is a great deceiver, as Lady Carnbee said: and if he stayed there so long, only to punish the race that had wronged him, why should I ever have seen him again? for I had received my share. But who can tell what happens in a heart that often, often, and so long as that, comes back to do its errand? If it was he whom I have seen again, the anger is gone from him, and he means good and no longer harm to the house of the woman that loved him. I have seen his face looking at me from a crowd. There was one time when I came home a widow from India, very sad, with my little children: I am certain I saw him there among all the people coming to welcome their friends. There was nobody to welcome me,—for I was not expected: and very sad was I, without a face I knew: when all at once I saw him, and he waved

his hand to me. My heart leaped up again: I had forgotten who he was, but only that it was a face I knew, and I landed almost cheerfully, thinking here was some one who would help me. But he had disappeared, as he did from the window, with that one wave of his hand.

And again I was reminded of it all when old Lady Carnbee died—an old, old woman—and it was found in her will that she had left me that diamond ring. I am afraid of it still. It is locked up in an old sandal-wood box in the lumber-room in the little old country-house which belongs to me but where I never live. If any one would steal it, it would be relief to my mind. Yet I never knew what Aunt Mary meant when she said, “Yon ring was token,” nor what it could have to do with that strange window in the old College Library or Rule’s.

RECOLLECTIONS OF THOMAS CARLYLE.

WHILE I was yet very young, being still in my teens, a friend put 'Sartor Resartus' into my hands, and my attention was at once riveted by its opening sentences. Fascinated by its novelty, and undeterred by any so-called difficulties of style, I quickly became absorbed in the book. Happily, I at once caught its central idea, so that, far from being repelled by the quaint, whimsical conceits and strange satire, I rather dwelt lovingly on the tender pathos, the shadowy autobiography of a great nature revealed there. Repeated perusals confirmed and deepened these impressions, so that 'Sartor Resartus,' as it was the first, has always been the chief and the best loved of Carlyle's works. Next in order of reading came 'The French Revolution,' then 'The Letters and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell,' followed by 'The Life of John Sterling.' It is very little to say that the books last named opened up new worlds to me, for hitherto history and biography had been mere blanks. 'Sartor,' and even the beautiful 'Past and Present,' were more or less familiar ground; but that mere lives of people and dry facts of history could be so vivid, and make one's heart beat so, was indeed a new thing. As time went on, quite a passion of gratitude and admiration for this new teacher, this great genius, filled my heart almost to overflowing; book after book was read, even to the last published volume of the then nearly completed 'Frederick the Great,' and at last I wrote, to the relief at any rate of my own overburdened heart. Of that

letter I made no copy, but of one thing I am sure, I neither asked for interview or reply, and never told a soul that I had written. Just at first, perhaps, my hopes were stirred a little at the postman's knock; but such hopes soon died away, and the time passed on — till one day, one never-to-be-forgotten day in October 1865 (just about six months after my letter), I was told a lady had called to see me, and on entering the room I saw a lady indeed, but a perfect stranger, who told me that she was Mrs Carlyle. Overwhelmed by this announcement I sank into the nearest chair; but the beautiful eyes and kind smile soon reassured me, so that I was quite at my ease in talking to this unexpected but most welcome visitor.

"You wrote to Mr Carlyle some time ago, and have received no answer." "I did; but indeed I never expected an answer." "Oh, it was not polite of him; but he was very busy then finishing 'Frederick,' and afterwards we were away, so that I thought I would come and see you." Her next remark was, "You are a very young person to be reading and admiring his works." On my replying that I had done so for some years, she said, "Why, how old are you?" I laughingly told her my age. "Child, you don't look a day more than twenty! Would you like to see him?" "I should indeed," was my reply. "Very well, then, come and have tea with us next Monday; we have tea at half-past eight, but you come at seven."

After my father had seen Mrs

Carlyle to her carriage, and watched her smiling farewell to me as I stood on the doorstep, he said, "Who is that lady?" "Mrs Carlyle," said I. "*Who?*" "Thomas Carlyle's wife." "Have you been writing to him?" was my father's very natural question, and he was greatly pleased when I replied, "Yes, and Mrs Carlyle has asked me to go and see them." My father's astonishment was very great, but he said only, "Oh! then you must go." My own state of ecstasy can better be imagined than described, to see my hero, to be in the same room with him! How vividly I remember it all! the strange shy happiness, and my delight as the day itself dawned. Mrs Carlyle came on Friday, so that Monday was not long in coming.

Knowing nothing of Chelsea, in my ignorance of the locality I took train to Victoria, then walked to Cheyne Row; but was in good time after all, for seven struck as, reaching the house, I stood with beating heart before the door. As I followed the servant up the stairs and to the drawing-room door, I trembled; but as the door opened, I saw Mrs Carlyle on a sofa at the farther end, who started up with both hands outstretched in welcome, and kindly drew me down to a place by her side. My whole heart went out to her in love, the kindly gracious woman! Soon she took me to her own room (just behind the drawing-room) to remove my bonnet and cloak, and in my happiness I told her how, in the days which had intervened between her visit and that evening, I had not *lived* but *waited*, and she patted my cheek with an amused indulgent smile.

Not long after this Mr Ruskin was announced, and we were all three soon engaged in animated

conversation. Every time the door opened I looked eagerly towards it, as the servant made preparations for tea. At last Mrs Carlyle came in, erect and tall. Crossing the room to where I stood, he said, "How do you do, Miss ——?" as quietly as though he had been in the habit of meeting me, and I responded as quietly, hiding a tempest of emotion under my outward calm. As our hands met I heard a low murmur from Mr Ruskin or Mrs Carlyle—I suppose, in approval of our quiet greeting. Turning from me, Mrs Carlyle spoke to Mr Ruskin, as took no further notice of me that time, for which I was grateful. Tea being ready, Mrs Carlyle placed me at her right hand and (to her unconcealed amusement) Mr Carlyle seated himself on my other side, still not speaking to me, but carefully attending to all my wants, Mrs Carlyle on saying to him, "No, don't give her milk; I have cream here for her." Mr Ruskin sat opposite and I was very, very happy. The conversation I took no notice of, but I remember that we talked many things—of John Stowe's *Edwards Irving*, of Mr Oliphant's *Life of the late Mrs Carlyle's own early Mrs Oliphant's 'Agnes,'* was told to read; and when, tea being over, I turned to me and sat at the table, I remembered retaining our places—Mrs Carlyle and I did, moving nearer to each other. After a time some of Mrs Carlyle said caused I to exclaim, "You are against the Bible." I forget; but she said, "New Testament I deny," he said, "citement rising

walking up and down the room. "I find in the New Testament pardon and pity for the penitent, but no whitewash for scoundrels." This phrase may be familiar to readers of the 'Latter-day Pamphlets.' I have seen it in print there, but it was new to me then, and thrilled me by its indignant emphasis and the evident sincerity of the speaker.

Questions as to my own reading followed, and on my answering "No" when asked if I had read 'Wilhelm Meister,' he said, "I'll give it you right away," and sprang up to reach a copy from the shelves. Mr Ruskin exclaimed, "My dear Mr Carlyle, what can a girl make of 'Wilhelm Meister'?" and to my great pride and pleasure Mr Carlyle answered, "I expect Miss — will make a great deal of it."

But the time was going on, and my day of days was drawing to a close. I spoke to Mrs Carlyle of going, and she in her turn quietly spoke to Mr Ruskin, then told me that Mr Ruskin would take me home in his carriage if I would wait till it came. Mrs Carlyle went with me into her room while I put on my outdoor garments, and on our return found Mr Carlyle writing my name in 'Wilhelm Meister.' By a fortunate accident he had blotted the writing in the first volume. So he wrote in them both, and I have them with this inscription:—

"To Miss — — —,
With kind regards
And best wishes.

T. Carlyle.

Oct. 1865."

Furthermore, he made the books into a neat parcel for me with his own hands, and as he did so, talked to me. When the carriage was

announced, Mr Carlyle said, "I'll take Miss — down, I'll escort Miss —," and giving me his arm, he led me down, placed me in the carriage, and stood there bare-headed, waiting for Mr Ruskin, who soon came running lightly down the stairs, and taking his seat beside me, we quickly drove away.

How well I remember that drive! After a few remarks upon the pleasant evening we had just passed, and the great kindness shown to me, we had a discussion, I had almost said a dispute, as to the relative beauty of sunlight or moonlight (the moon was remarkably bright and beautiful that night); but Mr Ruskin's amused sense of the unsuitability of 'Wilhelm Meister' to a girl was still uppermost, and he said, "I *should* like to know your impressions of the book." "You shall certainly have them, then," was my reply; and as soon as I had read it I sent Mr Ruskin a letter, receiving in reply a kind note, and a little later on a copy of 'The Ethics of the Dust,' inscribed to me with "The Old Lecturer's sincere regards."

In taking leave of me, Mrs Carlyle said, "I'll come to you again in about a fortnight;" and true to her promise, she came, bringing with her a young German lady,—not alighting from the carriage herself, but sending this lady to tell me that Mrs Carlyle would like me to put my bonnet on and join them in a drive. She was full of interest and curiosity as to how Mr Ruskin and I had got on together, teasing me not a little about my having to write a critique on 'Meister.' On alighting from the carriage some little accident happened (I upset a work-basket, I think), for which I apologised so heartily that Mrs Carlyle twitted

me about my "delicate remorse." The next few weeks I neither saw nor heard anything from Chelsea; then came this kind and characteristic note:—

"5 CHEYNE ROW, CHELSEA,
Sunday.

"DEAR MISS —,—I have ever so many times thought of going to you in these weeks. But — 'the Pigs have run thro'.' My carriage-horse has had a bad foot, and is still in the hands of 'the Doctor.' I myself have been off my sleep, and besides, 'troubled about many things,' and So-and-so.

"Would *you* come to me? Would you mind the long road back—with no Mr Ruskin to take you?

"I have a charming friend coming to keep me company on Wednesday next in Mr Carlyle's absence. Would you come and make her acquaintance? in spite of there being no Mr C.? If so, let me see you to dinner between five and six o'clock—on Wednesday 6th. Perhaps you may get a glimpse of Mr C. before you need to leave.

"One of my servants could take you to an omnibus—if you liked.—Yours kindly,

"JANE WELSH CARLYLE."

Of course the invitation was joyfully accepted, and we three dined together. Mrs Carlyle was dressed in black velvet. She had a pale blue ribbon round her neck, to which was attached a large gold cross; she also wore a brooch which had been given to her by Goethe. One of her bracelets (a very pretty one, pebbles of different colours, and beautifully cut, polished, and set in silver), she told the lady I had been invited to meet, was a present from the same great man. Soon after we had adjourned to the drawing-room I heard the latch-key in the door, and listening intently, heard steps and voices in the hall. Mrs Carlyle gave me a mischievous smile as Mr Carlyle, followed by two gentlemen, entered the room. They

were all in high spirits, and had been to see "Chang," the Chinese giant. After Mr Carlyle's kind "How d'y'e do!" I had no further word from him that night, but was sufficiently interested in listening to the brilliant, clever talk. One of these gentlemen was Professor Tyndall, the other I did not recognise. The Professor gave me my tea, and talked to me a little, but I preferred listening, — keeping well in Mrs Carlyle's shadow, and slipping quietly away when it grew late.

It must have been about this time, too, that Mrs Carlyle came, and brought Miss Geraldine Jewsbury, staying with me quite a long time. It soon became a habit to watch for the familiar carriage, and either to welcome her for a visit or to go with her for a drive. She often came to me on Sunday afternoon. One wet and dreary day I was sitting alone when the bell rang. I gladly ran to answer it, and saw a strange gentleman standing there; but looking beyond him, I saw the dear face smiling me from the carriage window. was eagerly dashing forward, was peremptorily waved back, orders to get my bonnet and c out. Mr George Cooke was companion; and in spite of wind and rain, we were a bright and merry, Mrs Carlyle taking my hand, and holding it for a great part of the time. That day she and Miss Jewsbury I had seen 'Punch's C Almanack,' and on its likenesses of all the literary people, very comical, with absurd details describing these I spied "Carlyle" together. Carlyle in full Scotch costume; he carried a child's hat and with the other

ing pens and ink over his shoulder, and the lines were these :—

“ Carlyle, having finished ‘Friedrich’ altogether,
Is off to Scarboro’ to spend the summer weather.”

Oh, how she laughed, and how delighted she was ! “The first time ‘Punch’ has taken any notice of him,” she said. Another time Mrs Carlyle said, “There is something in the carriage for you—run and look.” I found there a large blue china plate, still happily in my possession.

So she cheered and brightened my life, and the weeks passed till the spring came, and with it the appointment of Mr Carlyle as Lord Rector of the Edinburgh University. Her pride and pleasure were unbounded, and we had many happy talks about it, until I heard that Mr Carlyle had gone, and I received this little note :—

“WINDSOR.

“DEAR LITTLE WOMAN,—I am here, on a visit to Mrs Oliphant, for two days ; but mean to be home to-morrow. I wonder if you would like to spend good part of Monday with me ? I will go to you about two on Monday, and bring you back with me if you be willing.—Yours sincerely,
“JANE WELSH CARLYLE.”

I was ready at the time appointed, and more than willing—eager and anxious—to compare notes with her about the great speech, and people’s ideas of Carlyle. She was bright, and even kinder to me than usual. We made some calls, or rather Mrs Carlyle did, leaving me in the carriage ; and afterwards we dined together. In the drawing-room, as she lay back among the cushions, I noticed, for the first time, how frail she looked, and how languidly her fingers moved as she knitted. I sat on a low seat beside her, as she told me of

her beautiful mother, and sent me for different miniatures, and a large album containing some very curious things ; till some gentlemen joined us, and we had tea. Our conversation was chiefly on the all-absorbing topic, I remember. When the time came for me to leave, one of the gentlemen was commissioned to see me into an omnibus.

On the following Friday I was surprised and delighted to see her again, accompanied by Count R——, the father of the young German lady I had seen. Mrs Carlyle was radiant, and had brought ‘Punch’ for me to see. The cartoon for the week was “Wisdom and Windbag” : on the one side Bright lampooned as “Windbag” ; Carlyle, with grave dignity, on the other side, was “Wisdom,” and an extract from his speech was given. She was full of wifely pride and triumph, and was anxious for me to share in her pleasure. My father talked with her a great deal that afternoon, and after she had gone, told me Mrs Carlyle had promised him a copy of ‘Past and Present.’

To the end of time I shall remember that bright little visit, for it was the last. On the next day she died, suddenly, and swiftly departed. By the great kindness of Mr Aitken, a nephew of Mr Carlyle’s, the news was gently broken to me on the Sunday afternoon ; but the stern and awful fact remained—she had gone. Miss Margaret Welsh (her cousin) came from Scotland to take charge of the forlorn house and receive Mr Carlyle on his sad home-coming. This lady, Miss Jewsbury, and the Misses R—— were most kind to me ; still, the sun of my little world had gone. Beyond a short letter

of condolence, I could not intrude myself on Mr Carlyle's notice, and all seemed ended; and so it would have been but for his own great goodness. The subjoined note came to me one day:—

"5 CHEYNE ROW, CHELSEA,
Tuesday, 10th July.

"MY DEAR MISS —,—Mr Carlyle has asked me to write a few lines to you to say that he would be very glad to see you, if you could come up to Chelsea on Saturday next, any time before 2 o'clock. I hope it may be convenient for you to come that day, as I think Mr Carlyle would prefer Saturday, if you could possibly come. I know you will if you can. I was very glad to hear that you arrived safely at home that evening from kind Miss Jewsbury's.—With kind regards, believe me, yours very sincerely,
MARGARET WELSH."

I went to Chelsea, and was shown straight in to Mr Carlyle as he sat in the back-part of the dining-room. He had aged very much, and I was greatly impressed by the solemn sadness of his manner, the great dignity (if I may say so) of his grief. He at once began to talk of his wife ("My Jane who has just left us"), and told me a great deal, which all the world knows now, but which sounded very sacred to me then. He told me of her brilliant youth, of their early married days, of her constant and bright helpfulness, and then, coming down to the present, said to me, "It was all her doing that you ever came here; you would never have come here but for her." I knew it well, and said so, speaking a little of my great love for her. Mr Carlyle answered, "And she thought well of you; you don't know how well she thought of you." Then he told me the reason of his sending for me: it was his wish to give me something in remembrance of

"his Jane," and thought he would make me a life member of "The London Library," so that I could always have reading enough. Then he handed me a small envelope containing a ticket of life membership—

"For Miss —,—,
14th July 1866.

T. Carlyle."

—saying, "I give it you, in his name, and for her sake." It had been hard work to battle with his emotions; I had succeeded tolerably well till now. I think Mr Carlyle saw the struggle, and kindly dismissed me. In a very short time, however, he came up to the drawing-room, and said that he had forgotten to tell me that this was her birthday, and that was why he so wished to see me on this particular day. Miss Welsh's warm congratulations, and the wine he insisted on my drinking, did good.

Both Miss Welsh and Miss Jewsbury, and the kind German lady often invited me over; and Miss Welsh returned to Scotland. Miss Aitken, bright, clever, friendly, came to live with her uncle, and from time to time saw him for a few minutes. As time passed on I began to be gaged to be married, and arranged that I should be evening with them, November 1868. We were to be Mr Carlyle, Miss Aitken, and Mr Carlyle had been with Lady Ashburton of that year, and I of his visit; but part of the time of my greatest interest inquiring into my prospects, advising friends, &c., &c. sort of a farewell

of sadness hung over us all. Mr Carlyle looked exactly as he does in Böehm's statue of him. The attitude and the dress were exactly the same; for he wore a grey dressing-gown lined with red, and when I saw the statue afterwards in the Academy, I was struck by the strong resemblance to Mr Carlyle as he was that night.

In the years after my marriage I made many a pilgrimage to Chelsea, and enjoyed many a meeting with Carlyle. Some of these stand out with beautiful distinctness, others have faded into the background of memory. Once I remember saying, "It is the honour and happiness of my life to have known you," to which, with grave deliberate courtesy, he replied, "It is very good of you to say so," always sad and heavy-laden, yet always kind and courteous "for her sake."

At last the end *did* come, and on the 4th November 1879 I looked my last upon him in this world. I had gone up as usual; but his niece (now¹ Mrs Alexander Carlyle) and I had stayed too long talking in her own private room, till we heard Mr Carlyle going down-stairs. He was by this time too feeble to walk, and only took carriage exercise. I ran-down after him, and he gave me a kind smile, saying, "Well, here I am as weak as a sparrow, and longing to be gone"; then after a few words of inquiry after my health and happiness, "Good-bye, I give you my blessing," and held my hand longer than usual. He knew, and so did I, that in all probability it was for the last time.

I would say to any one who would wish to know Carlyle, Go to his books; his true and enduring monument is there. Do not listen to what any one says about him,

even to what in his sad lonely old age he says about himself; *read* with an open mind: if the seeing eye and the understanding heart are the reader's, he will discern, behind all the painstaking research and scrupulous fidelity to truth, the large loving heart of the writer. It has been said, Carlyle despised the people. That I deny. It is true he did not love "mobocracy," and believed in government by the wise and good. He looked forward to no "universal reign of rose-water"; he had no "Morrison's pill" specific, but an unfaltering trust in God. "The soul of the universe is just," he would say. And remember, the Christian hope was not his; Carlyle's foregone conclusion was that Christianity is dead: his great soul, with its brave, mournful outlook, was denied the comfort and consolation of that "sure and certain hope." He has gone! the foremost and the greatest of our generation, as a teacher of righteousness and an inspired seer. In my young days, "The man is mad" was thought sufficient answer to any who quoted his opinions; and, with a mixture of pity and contempt, I heard young men speak of having had "the Carlyle fever." But the heaven has worked, and the thoughts of the great thinker have become the heritage of the many. A truly great man one may well call Carlyle. Defects and limitations he had, of course, for he was human; but the world owes him a great debt of gratitude, and it almost seemed to me a sacred duty to pay this my tiny tribute of undying love. Thank God, one need not speak of love in the past tense, there is always the future, and in the meantime it is an ever-present possession.

¹ Alas! I should have said *then*, for she too has gone.

AN UNCROWNED KING.

A ROMANCE OF HIGH POLITICS.

CHAPTER IV.—A CANDID FRIENDSHIP

IN the morning no reference was made to the conversation of the evening before either by Caerleon or by Cyril, although the latter found an ominous confirmation of his suspicions in the fact that his brother showed no sign of intending to make any change in his plans after what had been said.

"He must really be smitten with the girl," argued Cyril mentally, "for if he wasn't, he would take fright at what I said, and want to part company at once. Well, it's his own look-out. He ought to marry, and it's very evident that he'll marry whom he likes. This girl is not bad-looking, and it's a strong point in her favour that the O'Malachy daren't set foot on English ground. A decent veil can be drawn over his existence so long as he keeps out of the way. At any rate, it's not my business to make a fuss, and if I did, Caerleon would probably go and propose at once. I'm glad I said what I did, for now he knows what he's about. He can't say that he's been let in for anything blindfold, but I mean to be satisfied with that."

Having come to this agreement with himself, Cyril accompanied his brother without a murmur to the post-office, whence the telegram refusing Count Temeszy's invitation was duly despatched, after which they returned to the inn. Their way lay through the Kurgarten, a desolate piece of ground adorned with a few straggling bushes and a good many dilapidated plaster statues, and here they found the O'Malachy family, occupying three

of the paintle arranged in a in which the w spring were di achy was sipp bler of greenis fluid with the his wife, in tl Parisian mor bonnets, was her daughter the few othe patronised tl the majority Hungarian J with such str sat bolt uprig and abstracte expression of protesting, as against her m the delight s contrast betw the one so m pellent, the graceful, pliar a sharp one, approached, f emphatically, Nadia could contamination without holdi sively aloof f less reticent.

"Good gra girl looks," he edly bad form ther's talk wil talk as it is, Madame O'M houses one go conversationa here."

"Perhaps

the talk less edifying than exasperating," said Caerleon absently, trying to put himself in Nadia's place, and to realise her disgust with the stream of scandal and innuendo in which her mother delighted.

"Don't be a prig," was the sole answer vouchsafed by Cyril; and they went on and greeted the O'Malachys, and annexed two unoccupied chairs near them, Caerleon sitting down beside Nadia, Cyril by her mother. Presently the O'Malachy finished his penance, and they rose and sauntered together towards the hotel.

"We have heard from my son this morning, my dear marquis," said Madame O'Malachy to Caerleon. "He hopes to be with us to-morrow."

"Does he intend to make a long stay here?"

"Alas, no! He is still mad about Thracia, and insists on going on there almost immediately. What can he expect but defeat and ruin? But he shall not go into danger alone. There are mineral springs at Tatarjé, which the O'Malachy has been advised to visit, and we shall all accompany my poor misguided Louis. We may not be able to do much, but at any rate we shall be near him."

"But if the country is in such a dangerous state, are you not afraid to visit it?" asked Caerleon.

"Afraid!" repeated Madame O'Malachy, high scorn in her tone. "My dear marquis, for what do you take us? We are accustomed to danger."

"I should rather like to see Thracia," remarked Caerleon, not very relevantly. "It must be a very interesting country."

"Then why wouldn't you and Lord Cyril come with us?" asked the O'Malachy.

"Oh no, my friend," cried his wife, "that would never do. Have you forgotten the unsettled state of Thracia? Do you not remember that the people hate travellers, throw all kinds of vexatious restrictions in their way, seize every opportunity of insulting and injuring them? Our dear marquis must not come. The country is positively dangerous."

"Is that intended as a reason for our not visiting it?" asked Caerleon. "Cyril, I think we'll make a tour in Thracia."

"Oh, all right," said Cyril. "I hope your will is made, though as I am to be with you, it won't much matter."

"But you cannot intend this in earnest?" asked Madame O'Malachy, with the most ingenuous air of simplicity. "I tell you that it is absolutely dangerous to go to Thracia."

"You are going the wrong way to keep our friends back, Barbara," said the O'Malachy. "Do you not know that to hear that a place is dangerous makes ut their juty to visut ut?"

"But these English are so strange!" cried his wife, with artless amazement. "They write letters to their 'Times' to complain if the slightest inconvenience touches them at a hotel, or if a street-boy calls them a bad name, and yet they go to look for danger when it is unnecessary."

"One of the contradictions of human nature," remarked the O'Malachy, grimly, but when he and his wife and daughter had reached their own room, he returned to the subject: "I don't know what you were driving at just now, Barbara. Were you really trying to turn the young fellers back, or not? Caerleon is a decent boy enough. Was your heart suddenly filled with compassion for um, or were you

trying to make terms with your conscience?"

"That is it," returned Madame O'Malachy, with a side-glance at her daughter. "I do not wish to have it on my conscience that I brought these young men into Thracia. It is not my affair."

"Then whose is it?" asked Nadia.

"I say," went on her mother, "that I have done all in my power to turn them back. I have not led them on to their ruin. I have not made myself disagreeable to my own family, and pleasant to them, that I might induce them to attach themselves to my company. When they get into trouble—into danger," raising her voice as Nadia rose hurriedly and left the room, "their blood will not be on *my* head."

"How you women hate one another!" laughed the O'Malachy softly.

Louis O'Malachy arrived the next day, a dark-browed, taciturn, broad-shouldered young man, about a year older than Nadia, moving with a peculiar stiffness, as though his movements had always been restrained by a tight uniform. He took a great fancy to Cyril,—at least, his mother said that he had done so, and he certainly lost no opportunity of seeking his company. Indeed, the brothers found it almost impossible to escape from him, for whenever they went out, he invariably made his appearance, and offered himself as their companion. This being the case, Madame O'Malachy, compassionating Caerleon, who found himself, as she phrased it, the unwelcome third in this devoted comradeship, was wont to order Nadia to accompany her brother on all these occasions. To Caerleon himself she remarked, with a cold-blooded frankness that reminded him of her daughter's first interview with him, that to no

one but an I think of all escorting Me walks, but s England it people did n one had any might arise. Nadia's hear had strenuo posal in pri terror as to v proceed to te hung back. well that he her coming, and the reali a tumult of seneations w her. That s home had le in the face, fear, should this English should lay h wound, was her. It nee all his carefu of friendly adopted wh re-establish able footing appeared so persuaded h had not per conveyed in and after th him again, a and politica from the e their hearts and Louis politics. C ested in this not a little Louis was st to Thracia i to offer his vics, but h subject wer fiery fanatici been expecte

"An enthusiast?" said Cyril to himself. "He's no more an enthusiast than I am, and that's putting it pretty strong. A plotter he may be. If he's a patriot, he's one of his father's stamp, the dynamite and dagger school. And yet only an enthusiast would have taken such a step as to throw up his commission in the Scythian army for the sake of joining the Thracians. But what is he doing here? If he means to go to Thracia, why not hurry on there at once? It's not like an enthusiast to stick for days doing nothing at Janoezwar. Perhaps he hopes to enlist Caerleon and me as volunteers. Perhaps he doesn't like Caerleon's dangling after his sister. Can that be it?"

He thought of the contemptuous sniff with which Louis was wont to indicate his opinion of the way in which Caerleon gravitated inevitably to Nadia's side when they took their walks, but otherwise there was nothing to show that he disapproved of the intimacy. He might not welcome it, but he was not actively hostile; by no word nor action would he influence the result in either direction.

"Is he a philosopher or a black-mailer?" soliloquised Cyril. "Or does he only think Caerleon is a fool? I know men often are amused when any one falls in love with their sisters, and I can't say that I wonder at it myself in this case. What Caerleon can find to like in that sulky girl I can't imagine, but he really seems to be hooked this time."

Whatever Caerleon's state of mind might be, he went on his way calmly, heeding neither Cyril's lack of sympathy nor young O'Malachy's scoffs, for he had now fully made up his mind about Nadia. At first he had been alternately attracted and repelled by her, but the repulsion had been gradually overcome by the attrac-

tion. The girl was so transparently honest, so sincere in her earnest intolerance, so unconventional in the way in which she persisted in testing everything by the standards of right and wrong, instead of those of custom and fashion, that the man who had turned in disgust from the artificiality of the frivolous or emancipated girls he had met in troops in London could not but hail her as a kindred spirit. It is true that she offended his taste and scandalised his views of propriety twenty times a day by her outspoken utterances, but now that he knew the source whence these sprang he could honour if he could not appreciate them. And besides, she was softening, he was sure, under the influence of her friendship with him—he could not mistake the change; and it was seldom indeed that she addressed him now with the abruptness which he had mentally stigmatised as *farouche* on his first meeting with her. In the society of her own family, however, this change was not visible, and she was still rigid, severe, uncompromisingly plain of speech. In his character of candid friend, Caerleon felt it to be his duty to take her to task about this.

"I wish," he said to her with some trepidation, for he had suffered more than once in his self-imposed task of smoothing down the angles of this young lady's disposition, "that you could think it right to leave off apologising when you have said anything unpleasant. You have quite dropped it with me, you know, but you keep it up with my brother and your own people."

"But you told me that it was worse to you than the rude things I had said," objected Nadia, "and it is not so with the rest."

"No, indeed, they enjoy it," said Caerleon, "and that is just why I hate it. Can't you see that your brother and mine think it a good

joke to stir you up to say rude things, just for the pleasure of hearing you apologise with a jerk the next minute?"

"Yes, I see it," she answered; "but that makes it all the better discipline."

"Not for me," said Caerleon. "I think your self-discipline ought to take some account of other people's feelings."

"But surely," she said, "if I give pleasure to my brother and yours in this way, I am considering other people's feelings in doing it?"

Her voice as she said this was not particularly cheerful, but Caerleon treasured up the remark in his memory as the first approach to a joke that he had ever heard Nadia utter.

"Wouldn't it be equally good discipline," he said, "to stop before saying the rude things, and try to say something pleasant instead?"

"But that would not be true." Nadia regarded him with absolute horror. "Come what may, I must be true."

"It's rather presumptuous of me to quote texts to you," said Caerleon, "but isn't there something about 'speaking the truth in love'?"

"Why should it be presumptuous of you?" she asked quickly.

"Well, you see," he said, with some hesitation, "I don't live by rule, as you do. I haven't a system of self-discipline, or anything of that sort."

"You think I am proud—conceited?" she said. "You think I set myself up upon a pedestal! Ah no, Lord Caerleon, I entreat you, do not think that. God knows how very weak and feeble I am, how I continually discover in myself that horrible temptation to insincerity. Since I have known you, it has beset me even more than before. Because I know that you are listening, I am continually

tempted to let things pass, to join for politeness' sake in conversation that I know is wrong. You cannot tell what it costs me to speak out, and you try to make it harder for me."

"Indeed I don't want to do that," said Caerleon, touched by the illogical reproach of her last sentence. "I only want to ask you whether you couldn't make your protests mentally, and not aloud. I never like to hear a girl speak to her mother as you do. Can't you make some allowance for her? She must have had a hard life—bad training, perhaps. There may be more excuse for her than we know."

"I wish I knew it, then!" cried Nadia. "You cannot know her as I do. She delights in intrigue for its own sake. It gives her an artistic pleasure to do a thing in a roundabout way instead of straight. Do you not see that it is far worse for me to realise this than it can be for you? You cannot tell what torture it was for me to find out when I first came here from home—from my godmother's—that mother would never tell the truth if a falsehood were possible. I that I must stand against her fluence, or I might grow her."

"I don't fancy you would Caerleon; "but of course, say, you are a better judge of your own circumstances than I suppose you feel the same difference to your brother, as though you had scarce word for him."

"He has not many for Nadia drily. "No, I know Louis. He is not good

"Not like him!" cried "But he is your brother

"I hope I love him," meditatively. "I shall do anything bad to him To do him good—to

—I would die, oh, how willingly !
But I cannot like him."

"But wouldn't you be better able to do him good if you did like him?" asked Caerleon. Nadia considered for a moment.

"I can't help it. One cannot like a person who one knows is not good. You yourself, if Milord Cyril were to become false, to break his faith, you could not like him any longer."

"I see what you mean, but I'm afraid I should have a sneaking fondness for the poor old chap still," said Caerleon. "But what has your brother done that you should talk of him in this way?"

"I do not *know*," was the reply. "I only guess. They tell me nothing. But I know enough to be sure about him."

"And what is that?" asked Caerleon incautiously. Nadia drew herself up.

"That I cannot tell you, Lord Caerleon. If you had now any interest in Thracia, or were likely to be at all affected by my brother's doings, I might tell you what I suspect, but you cannot expect me to gratify mere curiosity."

"I beg your pardon, I'm sure," said Caerleon, taken aback by this outburst. "Pray don't think that I want to know anything you don't wish to tell me."

"Please forgive me," said Nadia. "I was rude again. Only I am afraid of telling you what I ought not, and I don't wish to be disloyal."

"I quite understand," said Caerleon, although at the very moment he was reflecting that the ins and outs of a woman's mind were beyond the wit of man to penetrate. "But tell me what you mean by saying *if* I had any interest in Thracia? I remember that on the day I met you first you told me you were sorry when I declined the crown. Why was it?"

"Because I thought you ought to have accepted it," returned Nadia. Then, fearing that her tone had been slightly dictatorial, she added hastily, "I mean that if I had been in your place I should have accepted it."

"But you thought so—you, a Scythian in politics?" asked Caerleon.

"I thought I had told you that our circle—my godmother's—were not necessarily Scythian in politics," said Nadia. "We desire to take the side of justice, of right. I am certain that if Scythia were to enter on an unrighteous war, Count Wratisloff would lift up his voice against it at once. And so we desired for Thracia only the man who would be most likely to rule it well."

"Then you think I ought to have accepted the crown?" said Caerleon again. She caught him up quickly.

"I cannot judge for you. Only your own conscience can do that. But I have always been taught never to refuse work that offered itself, unless it would interfere with other work on which one was already engaged, and even then one should consider carefully which was the more important of the two. You know best where your responsibilities would have been greatest—in Thracia, or at home in England. Wherever there was most to do, there your work lay, I think. And you might have done so much for Thracia!"

"But would you have had me go against my father's express wish?" asked Caerleon indignantly. "If you will allow me to have had a conscience at all in the matter, I believe it pointed distinctly to my staying at home."

"That made a difference," assented Nadia. "I cannot judge your circumstances for you, as I have said, but I was sorry at the

time that you refused the crown, and I am sorry still that you are not King of Thracia now. You might do so much good there."

A little annoyed by her persistence, Caerleon walked on beside her in silence for a while. They had left Cyril and Louis far behind, and were following a path which presently struck across the main road through the mountains. Usually the road was almost as lonely as the rocky paths, but on this occasion a band of men were visible in the distance, coming from the direction of the plain.

"It must be some of the Thracian harvesters," said Nadia. "When their own harvest is over, numbers of them cross into Hungary and hire themselves out to help the farmers, for the corn ripens later here. I suppose they are returning home with their wages, now that the harvest is over."

As they walked on, they gained a closer view of the Thracians, a body of tall, lithe, dark-skinned men, tired and footsore, wearing ragged clothes that had once been gaily coloured, shirts that had once been white, and great leather boots. They slackened their pace as they approached the strangers, and one man, who seemed to be the leader of the party, addressed Nadia in broken German.

"Oh, the poor things!" she said, turning to Caerleon. "This has been a bad year for them. The rain and the floods have injured the corn so much that there was scarcely any harvest. They have only earned enough to keep them while at work, and they have nothing to buy food with on their journey home. I wish I could give them something, but I have no money," and she exhibited an empty purse as she spoke.

"Poor beggars!" said Caerleon. "Give them this, Miss O'Malachy,"

and he turned a half-coin out of his pocket into Nadia's hand. So the man, who was full of gratitude, and rapidly the value of the money it would feed himself and his companions until they got home. Turning over his hand as if to assure their reality, he came back with a shilling, and looked a puzzled way.

"Tell him that it's all right," said Nadia, "that he can get it at the first big town he comes to." Caerleon to Nadia; but it was interpreted to him as anything wrong about the idea. They liked English shillings, and he would make a shilling and wear it in the pocket of the gracious lady who had given it to him.

"Oh, but it was no more than a shilling," said Nadia hastily. "You must have given him a Lord Caerleon."

"Lor' Carlin'?" said the man, puzzled. Then he pointed to Caerleon, his head bowed. "Not Carlino? the English Carlino?"

"Yes," said Nadia. "Caerleon and king are the only names he can understand," she added, who was suffering a little from embarrassment at the man's manner. The man went down on his knees, and kissed his hand, and then he put it on his head. Then Caerleon could protest, he was beckoning forward his companions, calling out in an unknown tongue.

"This is too much," said Caerleon to Nadia. "I shall tell them that you gave them the money."

"But that would be all right," responded Nadia, in a practical way; and Caerleon turned to allow his hand to be taken.

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each of the men in turn, the leader closing the ceremony by going through it himself a second time, saying earnestly in his barbarous German—

"Ah, why did not your Highness come to Thracia?"

"There!" said Nadia, when they had gone on their way with the blessings of the Thracians, "think how much you might have done for these poor men if you had been king. The whole country is desolate, or only half cultivated. It needs draining, improving, farming with proper implements. You Englishmen all understand farming, don't you? You could teach them just the things they ought to learn, and introduce English methods. And then, you could also enforce temperance legislation. The people drink dreadfully, rich and poor alike, and there is no Government control of the liquor traffic. It would be virgin soil, the ideal spot for testing theories. You could try as many experiments as you liked, even if you did not insist on total prohibition at once."

"I'm afraid I should experiment myself off the throne in no time," said Caerleon, laughing, but Nadia glanced at him without a smile.

"Better to fall through righteousness than to succeed through yielding to wrong," she said.

"You are oracular to-day," said Caerleon, at which she grew angry, and told him that as he did not like the way she talked, she would not talk at all; and to this decision she adhered, so that they returned to the hotel in silence. Her petulance was the more provoking that this was their last day at Janoszwart, and on the morrow the O'Malachy family would start on their journey to Thracia, while Cyril and Caerleon continued their walking-tour, intending to visit a number of ruined castles and other objects of

interest out of the beaten track before rejoining their friends at Witska, a mountain village celebrated for a medicinal spring, and situated exactly on the Thracian frontier. Just at the last moment Louis O'Malachy volunteered to accompany them, and as they could not very well refuse his offer they accepted it, although neither of them anticipated much pleasure from his society.

"He must be up to something," soliloquised Cyril; "but what can it be? I suppose we have merely to await developments; but meanwhile, to avoid any risk of accident, I will get Miss O'Malachy to do a little piece of business for me."

This piece of business was nothing more important than the posting of the letter of introduction to M. Drakovics which Mrs Sadleir had intrusted to Cyril; but he had an idea that Louis might manage, for some reason of his own, to intercept the missive if he knew of its existence, or even saw it posted, for he could not rid himself of the notion that the taciturn young patriot had other ends in view than furthering the independence of Thracia. Acting on this resolution, he succeeded in finding Nadia alone, and intrusted the letter to her to be posted as soon as possible after her arrival on Thracian soil, adding at a venture that it might prove to have very important effects on the after-history of Europe. He saw at once that she understood, and that she sympathised with his object, for her face lighted up.

"I see. I will be most careful. I thank you for trusting me—for letting me help, Lord Cyril."

"What a fanatic the girl is!" said Cyril to himself, as he went his way; but he had a comfortable conviction that it was rather safer to trust a fanatic than a cynic, and he felt secure as to the fate of

Mrs Sadleir's letter, and the note he had written with it. An hour later he left Janoszwär with Caerleon and Louis, and they began a tour for which none of them cared much, except to count the days until its end. Caerleon missed his talks with Nadia, Cyril was anxious to get to Witska and see whether the letter had produced any effect, and Louis displayed an eagerness to reach Thracia and enlist in the patriot army, which was rather inconsistent with his having come on the tour at a

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CHAPTER V.—A CALL OF DU

"There must be a fair or festival of some sort going on," said Caerleon, as they made their way to the inn where it had been arranged that the O'Malachy was to secure rooms for them.

"Perhaps the people have come together to do you honour," suggested Louis, but it struck Cyril that there was a shade of anxiety in his tone.

The inn was an oriental-looking house built round a courtyard, but conforming to the customs of the West so far as to possess a coffee-room—a fact which was proudly announced in German and Thracian in very large letters. There were no windows on the outside of the house to the ground-floor rooms, evidence of past border raids and attacks from brigands, but a balcony ran round each of the two upper storeys, giving the only means of access to the rooms which opened upon it. The courtyard was thronged with people, among whom Caerleon fancied he recognised some of the harvesters he had met a fortnight before with Nadia, and they watched with breathless curiosity the three dusty figures in tourist suits and hob-nailed boots, and commented upon

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patiently. "He might have waited until I had made myself respectable, at any rate. Well, I suppose I must see him, but I'll wash off a little of the dust of travel first"—"and just ask Nadia what she really thinks about the business," he added to himself, as Wright led the way up-stairs, and along the gallery which crossed the front of the house.

"Which are the O'Malachy's rooms, Wright?" he asked aloud, but as he spoke, Madame O'Malachy glided out of a door near him with her finger on her lip.

"Ah, my dear marquis, I am enchanted to see you!" she said, brightly. "But I will not detain you; you are summoned to more important business than talking to a chattering old woman—is it not so? Only I would ask you to have the great kindness to step softly and not to speak loud, for my daughter is a little indisposed."

"Miss O'Malachy ill? I hope it is not serious?" cried Caerleon.

"Nothing serious, I assure you. Merely a slight headache and lassitude, which will pass off to-morrow. Rest and quiet are her best medicines. She is too energetic, too eager for work, my dear marquis, but I know I may count on your consideration."

She went back into her room, and Caerleon pursued his way disappointed.

"I shan't be able to ask her about this wretched kingdom, then," he grumbled to himself. "But, after all, I know what she thinks, for she gave me her views plainly the last time I spoke to her."

"The old gentleman seemed to be in a orful 'urry, my lord," put in Wright, and Caerleon made a hasty toilet, and entered the coffee-room, where M. Drakovics was pacing impatiently from the door to the window and back again. Caerleon

would have shaken hands with him, but he drew back with a low bow.

"Your Majesty," he said, "I am here to announce to you that by a *plébiscite* of the whole nation you are invited a second time to occupy the throne of Thracia. I have with me a petition signed by every member of the Legislative Assembly, and by the mayor of every township, and the head of every village community in the country, entreating you to lay aside your scruples, and come to our help. The people will accept any conditions you may choose to make, as to advisers, Civil List, or anything of the kind;—I know that this will not weigh with you," as Caerleon turned away with an impatient gesture, "but I mention it to show you that the Thracians wish to deal generously with the man who will honour them by taking up their cause against the world."

"I must have the night to think over it," said Caerleon, after some moments of consideration. "You will remain here as my guest, I hope? By the bye, who are all the people outside?"

"They are your Majesty's loyal subjects," returned M. Drakovics, "who have come here to conduct you, as they hope, in triumph to Bellaviste."

"Very kind of them," said Caerleon, "but I am not their king yet. This proceeding looks unpleasantly like compulsion, M. Drakovics. I have no idea of being made king by force."

"Your Majesty is entirely mistaken," returned M. Drakovics in alarm. "These men are here merely with the intention of doing you honour, and of adding their entreaties to mine if you should prove to be still obdurate. They are all patriots, almost in despair for their country, for we are convinced that

Majesty has decided what course to take?"

"Yes," said Caerleon. "I have made up my mind to accept the Thracian crown."

He had no time to say more, for, to his horror and Cyril's delight, M. Drakovics fell at his feet and covered his hands with kisses, while he tried in vain to induce him to rise. Cyril recovered himself first.

"Perhaps we might postpone any further raptures until after breakfast," he suggested, mildly. "Even kings have appetites—their brothers certainly have."

"One moment!" cried M. Drakovics, rising and going to the window. "Your Majesty cannot tell what a load you have taken from my heart," he added, huskily, turning again to Caerleon. "I am satisfied now as to the future of my country. But I must tell the people. They have been as anxious as I have, and they will rejoice as I do."

He stepped out on the balcony, and addressed the throng of Thracians, who had again gathered round the house. A tremendous shout burst from them when he had spoken. Turning round with blazing eyes he beckoned to Caerleon.

"Show yourself to them, your Majesty. Speak a few words to them—I will interpret—and they will love you for ever."

Caerleon followed him out obediently, but speech was impossible in presence of the cry of welcome that went up as soon as he became visible. For some minutes he was perforce silent, while the people shouted themselves hoarse, flung up their caps into the air, leaped for joy, embraced one another, and wept copiously. He felt oddly reminded of his coming of age, when he had risen to make his speech at the great dinner his

father had given to the Llandiar-mid tenants amid a scene of excitement such as this, and they had sprung up like one man, and drunk his health with acclamations. They had presented him with an old silver punch-bowl—rather an incongruous gift for an uncompromising temperance man—and it had put him in an awkward predicament. A happy thought had struck him, he remembered, and he had told them that he would use the bowl for salad—a statement which was regarded as an exquisite joke, and received with shouts of approving laughter. It was strange that this should all pass through his mind now, as he stood waiting until the excitement calmed down a little, and he was able to obtain a moment's silence. He was almost as much at a loss for words as on that earlier occasion, but at last he managed to say—

"Gentlemen" (he felt strongly that this form of address sounded as though he were speaking to his former constituents rather than to his subjects, but it was difficult to know what other to use. "My people" would be a ridiculous affectation as yet, and "Men of Thracia" sounded theatrical). "Gentlemen, your trusted leader, M. Drakovics, has done me the honour of inviting me in your name to accept the crown of Thracia. It is only fair for me to tell you that I don't feel at all equal to the task of governing; but I have thought over the matter, and I hope that I am doing the right thing in undertaking it. God helping me, my sole aim will be to do what I can for the good of Thracia and the peace of Europe. I feel sure that I may count upon the help and advice of M. Drakovics in the difficulties which are sure to meet us, and I can promise to stick to you if you will stick to me."

There! it was over, and he was conscious that he had made a wretch-

ed mull of what he had meant to say, and felt certain that Cyril was grinning behind him, and maturing chaff on the subject of "House of Commons oratory," but M. Drakovics was translating his words to the Thracians, and they were replying with shouts of applause which echoed back from the mountain-side.

"Long live the English prince! Long live King Carlino! Down with Scythia! Long live Thracia and King Carlino!"

"I say, you know, this won't do," Cyril was saying to M. Drakovics, as soon as the three on the balcony could hear each other speak. "What do they mean by talking like that? His name is Philip. He can't go down to posterity as King Caerleon. It would be as bad as King York or King Lancaster. You must put them right."

"That we can do in his Majesty's proclamations," said M. Drakovics. "The people have grown so much accustomed to the name Carlino that I am afraid they will always apply it to him. It sounds familiar to their ears, and it is a kind of affectionate diminutive. But with regard to our future plans——" he went on, addressing Caerleon. "Will your Majesty allow me to tell the people that you will start to-day on your journey to Bellaviste?"

"Is it really necessary?" asked Caerleon. "I detest doing things in such a hurry."

"It is absolutely necessary," returned M. Drakovics, "that your Majesty should be crowned as speedily as possible. The whole future of the kingdom may depend upon it."

"Oh, very well," said Caerleon. "In for a penny, in for a pound. I have to live for Thracia now, I suppose. I'll give my servant orders to pack up."

He went back into the room before M. Drakovics could forestall him, or even intimate to Cyril that it would look well for him to do his brother's errands in future, and ran up-stairs to look for Wright, for bells there were none in this primitive hostelry. But Wright was speedily forgotten when he reached the upper balcony, for he saw Nadia coming towards him from the direction of the rooms occupied by the O'Malachy family.

"I hope you are better this morning," he said, eagerly, going to meet her. "I am so glad to see that you are able to get up."

"But I am always up at six," said Nadia. "Did you think I was ill?"

"I understood from your mother——" he began, but remembering that this would be to charge Madame O'Malachy with deceiving him, he changed the form of his sentence lamely enough, "I saw nothing of you when I got here yesterday, you know, and I was afraid you were not well."

"Did you expect to find me the gate waiting for you?" asked Nadia, sharply. "Oh, I did mean to be so rude," and blushed crimson. "I only that my room is at the back house, and I did not ever you had arrived."

"I was hoping," said slowly, "that we might friends, though I was so un- as to offend you the last talked."

"Now you are trying me ashamed of myself," "and it is not kind of Caerleon," she broke surveying him with "has anything happened is the matter?"

"Why?" he asked

"Because you

Something has happened. What is it?"

"Well, I am once more king elect, or designate, or whatever you call it, of Thracia, if that will account for it. I didn't know that the divinity that doth hedge a king was visible outwardly, but I suppose that's it."

"You have accepted the crown?" she asked, anxiously.

"I have done so, bearing in mind my last conversation with you. I hope you are pleased with me now?"

"It was what I said that influenced you to accept it? You would not have done it otherwise?"

"Scarcely, I think; but you showed me my duty so very clearly that I could hardly refuse it. You made it quite evident that you considered I was shirking responsibility when I refused the crown before."

"But what does it signify how I thought of you? How can my conscience judge for yours? Oh, I have been thinking since we have been here that I may have led you wrong. I ought to have advised you to see which was the harder to do—to accept or to decline the crown, and to choose that."

"But this is a new standard," said Caerleon. "Is it to take the place of the measuring of the responsibilities?"

"Not exactly; only to be used with it. Don't you see? Perhaps you prefer a responsible position, and then it might be better for you to take a lower place."

"I don't quite see it," said Caerleon; "but no doubt it's all right, since it satisfies you."

"Oh, don't follow me!" she cried, passionately. "I may have led you wrong already. Is it too late to do anything?"

"Quite too late, I'm afraid," said Caerleon. "I am as much King of

Thracia as I can be before I'm crowned, I suppose. Won't you congratulate me on my elevation, since I owe it to your advice?"

He held out his hand, and Nadia took it, but to his horror she stooped and touched it with her lips. "May God grant your Majesty a long and useful reign!" she said, and turned to fly, but Caerleon caught her wrist.

"Nadia, are you joking?" he said, angrily.

"Let me go! let me go!" she panted. "Oh, please let me go!" The cry seemed to be wrung from her by sudden, sharp pain, and Caerleon saw that her lips were quivering and her eyes full of tears. He loosed his hold, and she made her escape, leaving him gazing stupidly at the hand she had kissed.

"Oh, this little fool!" groaned Madame O'Malachy, from the partially open door of her room, whence she had witnessed the whole scene. "She might have had him at her feet at this moment, and now he may not be able to declare himself for weeks. And for what? A trifle, a caprice, a nothing! I snap my fingers at it! Will nothing but a crowned king serve you, mademoiselle? Surely it is as well to receive a crown with your husband as after him? Ah, these niceties of love! Who cares whether the marquis thinks that his prospective kingdom has induced you to accept him, or not? You know, and I know, that you have been in love with him since the second time you saw him. Fool! I have no patience with you," and hurling these words through her clenched teeth at the absent Nadia, her mother hurried through two or three intermediate rooms and came upon Caerleon through a door at the end of the balcony.

"What, my dear marquis, is it

you?" she cried, with a start. "I am rejoiced to see you again. But perhaps I ought to say 'your Majesty'! One cannot pretend not to know the reason of M. Drakovics's presence here."

"I hope M. Drakovics is happy," returned Caerleon, in a tone which showed pretty plainly that he himself was not. "I have accepted the offer of the Thracian crown."

"Then I congratulate the Thracians," said Madame O'Malachy, heartily. "My dear marquis (you really must excuse my employing the old title), I have seldom heard a more delightful piece of news. The Thracians could not do better, and for yourself it is a situation exactly adapted to your character and talents. You have your opportunity now."

"I thought so myself until a minute ago," said Caerleon, gloomily; "but now I begin to doubt it. Nadia will have nothing to say to me."

"Nadia—my daughter?" with a slight elevation of the eyebrows.

"Yes," said Caerleon, scarcely noticing the touch of *hauteur* which the lady had infused into her tone. "She seemed so much disappointed at my having refused the crown before that I thought she would certainly be pleased now, and she—she spoke as if she had never said a word to me in her life."

"But that may be quite as well," returned Madame O'Malachy, gracefully determined not to be balked of her point. "You must remember that the friendship *à l'anglaise* which has subsisted hitherto between your Majesty and my daughter cannot continue. You will now occupy very different positions."

"Is that what Miss O'Malachy thinks?" asked Caerleon, quickly.

"I have not spoken to her on the subject, but I have no doubt that that is what is in her mind."

"Then might I ask that you would have the kindness to let me see her again at once, madame? I will do my best to disabuse her of the idea."

"But what will you do, my dear marquis?"

"Ask her to share the throne with me."

"But it is impossible!" cried Madame O'Malachy. "I cannot allow anything of the kind. Your Majesty's chivalrous sentiments have carried you away, and you are willing to atone for a slight mistake by a lifelong sacrifice. Your friendship was a mistake—I admit it freely, in view of the events which have since come to pass—but we will not make things worse by over-estimating it. I sympathise with you, but I assure you that you need fear no trouble from us. Suffer us simply to retire quietly—we will not force ourselves upon your notice, and my daughter is far too proud to show any regret for what has happened."

"But you mistake me, madame," cried Caerleon, impatiently. "There is nothing to regret in our friendship—on my side, at any rate. Of course I can't answer for O'Malachy's feelings, but I am only anxious to replace the friendship by—by something strong."

"My dear marquis, I believe in your chivalry, but your future is not in your own hands. M. Drakovics will have something to say about it."

"M. Drakovics will have to say on the subject of my daughter. That is a question I shall settle myself."

"But you must consider the kingdom. Much may be lost by your marriage, and an unknown girl not of the highest rank—in modern times, at least—might do a great deal of harm."

"I don't think I am called upon to consider my kingdom to such an extent as that," said Caerleon. "I am anxious to have the matter settled before I am crowned, so that if the Thracians think themselves entitled to complain, they may do it before I am irrevocably their king."

"But there is no need to publish that," said Madame O'Malachy, anxiously. "It would sound as though you wished to defy M. Drakovics and his party. And there is another reason why you must proceed very cautiously, and that is Nadia herself. You may trust me—I am an old woman, old and experienced, and Nadia is very young and foolish. As a woman of the world, I can appreciate your willingness to jeopardise your position for her sake; but you know what she is—an eccentric, a fanatic. I am convinced that she fears being thought to pursue you on account of your kingdom, and thinks that you may have perceived her feelings towards you, and only desire to marry her out of pity."

Caerleon stood pondering. He knew that the woman before him was false to the core—that very morning had given him another proof of the fact—but her words sounded so true, and the state of feeling they described so characteristic of Nadia, that he was bound to believe them. After all, she was Nadia's mother, and ought to understand her, and what interest could she have in misrepresenting things in this case? It was only natural to suppose that she would be more likely to strain every nerve to forward his wishes than to put obstacles in his way. Moreover, he had now confided in her to such an extent that he might as well throw himself on her compassion altogether.

"But what can I do?" he asked.

"You will let me see her and plead my cause?"

"Not at present, if you are a wise man," said Madame O'Malachy. "Leave her to herself for a little. Let her please her pride with the belief that she has rebuffed you effectually—her heart will suffer all the more. Then, when you are in your rightful place at Bellaviste, with all your splendour about you, speak to her again. She must see then that you seek her only because you love her, and she will be thankful to perceive it."

"But how shall I see her at Bellaviste?" asked Caerleon. "Are you going on there?"

"Have you forgotten," asked Madame O'Malachy, rather reproachfully, "that it has always been our intention to accompany Louis when he goes to try and obtain a post in the Thracian army? Shall we be less likely to visit Thracia now that we have a friend upon the throne?"

"But why not come on with us now?" asked Caerleon. "May I not have the pleasure of receiving you as my guests? I don't know the capacity of the palace at Bellaviste; but it must certainly be large enough to accommodate you, if you don't mind roughing it for a time in a bachelor's household."

"A thousand thanks," said Madame O'Malachy, with her sweetest smile, "but I am afraid we must decline your hospitable proposition. However, we will certainly continue our journey into your kingdom, and no doubt there will be a hotel at Bellaviste which can take us in. Rely upon me as your friend. I am not an enthusiast, I do not pretend to have no regard for the splendours of a throne, but I wish you well, and what help I can give you with this daughter of mine I will."

And with this assurance Caerleon must needs be content.

CHAPTER VI.—A ROYAL PROGRESS.

"Where is the king?" asked M. Drakovics, coming hastily into the coffee-room about an hour later, and finding only Cyril, who was engaged in performing some complicated operation with a bradawl and the strap of a knapsack.

"His Majesty," returned Cyril, in the choicest 'Court Circular' style, "is walking out this morning, and is probably at this moment conversing affably with some of his faithful subjects, through the medium of Mr Louis O'Malachy."

"These O'Malachys again!" cried M. Drakovics. "This must be stopped!"

He turned angrily to leave the room, but Cyril was at the door before him.

"One moment, monsieur. I wish to know on what terms we are to stand."

"I do not understand you, *milord*"—M. Drakovics was astonished—"but I hope to satisfy you later. Meanwhile, are you aware that Colonel O'Malachy and his family leave to-day, before his Majesty, for Belaviste, and intend to reside there for the present? That cannot be allowed."

"Now we have come to the point," said Cyril. "I want a plain answer to a plain question, M. Drakovics. Are you and I to work together or not? If we are to be friends, I will tell you at once that you are meditating a very great mistake, and that I wish to dissuade you to avoid it."

"*Milord*!" The Kosuth of the Balkans looked Cyril up and down in amazement visibly mingled with scorn. "I am highly honoured by your offer of co-operation, but my common sense does not perceive its advantages."

"No!" said Cyril, with unflinching calmness. "There are no advantages in this. You have

to reckon with my influence over my brother. You cannot persuade yourself that you know him as well as I do, and if you consider the matter a little, I think you will see that my advice is more likely to be followed than yours, and that the consequences of this might be unpleasant if you and I had the misfortune to disagree. In the second place, although you are very clever and very powerful, you are neither omnipotent nor omniscient, and the help of a man who has a little knowledge of the world, and some slight experience in diplomacy, might possibly be of use to you, even though he were the humble individual before you."

M. Drakovics gasped. The colossal impudence of his sovereign's brother seemed literally to take away his breath. "If you were anything but an Englishman," he said, slowly, "I should think that you wanted to be bought off."

"But since I am an Englishman," said Cyril, "you can't quite see what Thracia could offer me that should care for; and you are all right there. I went in for it business just for the fun of it, and for the sake of backing up Caerleon. I don't know course, what Mrs Sadleir told in the letter I forwarded; but what she said when she wrote that she must have let you know what my views were."

"She did," said M. Drakovics with some hesitation, "—"

He looked thoughtfully at Cyril for a moment, and spoke quickly, "You have studied the present position in the Balkans, *milord*, should be my course at this with regard to Roum, and our sovereign rights over Thrace."

"Despatch a special

well provided with money to Czari-grad immediately," said Cyril, without an instant's pause. "Make the Government there see that the election of an Englishman as king is a fresh bulwark against Scythian aggression. Secure their moral support at any cost, and get an assurance, no matter what you have to pay for it, that even if Scythia brings pressure on them to censure or disavow your action, they will take no active steps against you."

"Excellent!" cried M. Drakovics. "My dear friend, the messenger has already started. How your ideas jump with mine! But tell me, what next?"

"Send off immediately notes to the various Powers, informing them of my brother's election, and inviting their sovereigns to the coronation. Once the despatches are gone, don't lose a minute. Instead of heading straight for Bellaviste, take us at once to the nearest city or monastery where an archbishop is to be found. Beg, borrow, or buy a crown—you could make one with two or three of those gold plates from the *icons*, fastened together—and get Caerleon crowned at once. Remonstrances from the Powers will be beginning to pour in by that time, of course; but they will have to chase you about the country, and you won't open them until after the ceremony. Then you will regret that they arrived so late that, in the bustle and rush attendant upon the coronation, they were unnoticed."

"Oh, my friend, why were you not born a Thracian?" cried M. Drakovics, seizing Cyril in his arms, and imprinting a fervent kiss on his cheek. "Your plan is perfect: it has only one drawback—that it is impossible. Every King of Thracia must be crowned in the chapel of St Peter at Bellaviste. It is a small, rude building, standing as part of the palace, and in it Alexan-

der Franza, first of the name—the patriot-king—saw a vision of St Peter, the night before the great battle in which he burst the Roumi yoke. No other coronation would be valid in the opinion of the people, nor can the crown be legally removed from the chapel. It is in a great chest built into the wall, of which I hold one key, the Metropolitan another, and the king the third. I have it now to deliver to his Majesty, but none of the keys will open the box without the other two. Your brother cannot be crowned until we reach Bellaviste, for no make-shift crown would be tolerated by the people."

"It is an enormous pity," said Cyril. "Time is everything to us just now. Why not chance the people's superstition, and spring on them a king ready crowned, and safe on his throne?"

"Ah, you do not know our people," said M. Drakovics, sorrowfully. "Such a thing would be an outrage, a defiance of their religious feelings. No, we must wait until we reach Bellaviste; but I will take your advice as to the protests from the Powers. What is your feeling about Scythia?"

"Send the same note to her as to the other Powers; but let it be well understood privately that if she makes one hostile movement, you will prepare to contest every inch of ground, and will also throw yourself upon the protection of Pannonia, which will be only too ready to interfere, if there is any likelihood of war in the Balkans, and will be supported by her allies. Meanwhile, see that your army is ready to mobilise at the shortest notice and look out for Scythian spies."

"But that is my very point!" cried M. Drakovics. "These O'Malachys are Scythian spies, all of them. That is one imperative reason for their not being allowed to approach Bellaviste, and the

other is that Madame O'Malachy desires to entrap the king into marrying her daughter."

"Let us take the charges one at a time," said Cyril, calmly. "The O'Malachy and his wife are spies—there is no doubt of that—but for that very reason I would not only let them come to Bellaviste, but I would find room for them in the palace itself, if I could."

"You are joking!" said M. Drakovics, in astonishment.

"Not at all, I assure you. Think a moment. The more completely we can treat the O'Malachy family as my brother's guests, the better we can keep watch upon them. There is such a thing as a censorship even of private letters and telegrams in disturbed times, I believe; and it would be easier to work it with people we knew, and on whom we kept a watch, than with obscure persons whose doings might not attract our attention. Again, expelled from Thracia, as I suppose you would suggest, the O'Malachys would linger just across the frontier, setting in motion a whole horde of spies, all of whom we could not hope to trace, while we could never be sure that they themselves had not re-entered the kingdom in some disguise. It certainly seems a bold thing to admit them into the very heart of our defences, but they will be clever if they manage to see more than they are meant to see."

"But about Mademoiselle?" asked M. Drakovics, anxiously. "The king must not marry her. He must form an alliance which will strengthen his throne."

"You are right,—he must. But did you intend to tell him so? I know Caerleon a good deal better than you do, and you may take my word for it that as soon as you had said it he would go straight to Miss O'Malachy and lay the crown at her feet. So far as he is concerned, you

must let the matter take its course. Nothing can be said to him."

"But how, then, is it prevented?" cried M. Drakovics. "Shall the girl be kidnapped and carried off?"

"My good sir—no! I do not want all Europe in a fever of excitement, Caerleon throwing up the sponge to go and look for a girl for O'Malachy and his wife. I will make the finest possible use of such a tale. No; we must win her merely by means of money, you and I and Miss O'Malachy."

"Miss O'Malachy?" gasped M. Drakovics.

"Exactly; the young man is a very clever man, but you have no advantage of spending the British Embassy at Caerleon and making an exhaustive list of the Scythian society ladies. I know well enough the Cercle diplomatique in which Miss O'Malachy was brought up—not that it is in high quarters, quite true, but I was interested in it out of curiosity. Its members may be fanatics, but they are not fools, and I am pretty sure that Soudaroff has made his daughter as great an enemy as she is herself. Now you see why I was ready to lay a wager on the case the usual rule of the game is every one a knave until it is proved otherwise, and I expect her to do our business."

"But how?"

"I will lay the case before him and point out that Caerleon will ruin his cause and jeopardize the crown if he marries her. He will refuse him for his own sake."

"Impossible, milord! He will not give up the crown?"

"For his sake, I tell you, I will leave the style the girl is. We will leave it to me? If I fail in my trial, I give you full leave to throw off the match in your own way."

"I agree, milord, though I cannot believe you will succeed. No woman on earth would decline a crown, to be shared with the man whom, according to you, she loves passionately. But you shall try. By all means, milord, we work together, if you please."

"I thought so," laughed Cyril to himself, as M. Drakovics went out.

A little later, he saw from the balcony the O'Malachys' travelling-carriage coming round to the door, and watched while the family took their places in it. Madame O'Malachy, gracious and graceful as ever, was nodding pleasantly to the landlady, and her husband was cracking a joke with the travelled waiter, through whom all communications with the authorities of the inn had to be conducted. Louis, surly and unapproachable as usual, took his seat in the carriage without a word, and Nadia was equally silent as she sat upright by her mother's side, her face covered with a thick veil, which aroused Cyril's suspicions instantly.

"She has been crying," he said. "What a pity she isn't like her mother, for a little powder and paint would put it all right in that case. What Caerleon can see in her I cannot imagine."

Nevertheless, he kept his place on the balcony and waved a farewell to the travellers, watching the carriage as it wound round the curves of the rough mountain road until it was finally out of sight, after which he went back into the coffee-room to join Caerleon and M. Drakovics, who were discussing the question of the costume in which the new king was to make the journey to his capital. Evening dress and a tall hat were M. Drakovics's idea of the clothes suitable to the occasion; but Wright, who was assisting uninvited at the discussion, and who bore a grudge already against the Premier for inducing

Caerleon to stay in Thracia, flatly declined to "make a tomfool" of his master by helping him to don a swallow-tail coat in the daytime. Caerleon himself was in favour of adopting the Thracian national dress, as a delicate compliment to the people; but M. Drakovics objected to this on the ground that the Thracians were expecting an Englishman, and would be disappointed if they found him dressed like themselves.

"Will your Majesty not wear your uniform?" he asked, offering a suggestion in his turn. "That of your Volunteer cavalry, I mean?"

"My Yeomanry uniform?" said Caerleon. "I haven't got it here. In fact, I should have no right to wear it any longer if I had, for I resigned my commission before I left home, because the expenses connected with the troop were too much for me to meet in my present circumstances."

"But your uniform's 'ere, all the same, my lord," said Wright. "If your lordship remembers, it was sent on with the 'eavy luggage before the troop was decided to be given up, in case there was any grand doin's while your lordship were at the castle," and he nodded vaguely in a direction which he imagined to be that of Château Temeszy.

"Oh, well, if you've got it, you may as well wear it, Caerleon," said Cyril. "It's only a cast-off now, after all, and if Ceylon coolies and African chiefs are allowed to sport discarded British uniforms, I don't see why the King of Thracia shouldn't."

"Your comparisons are not exactly flattering to Thracia," said Caerleon, "and I don't think I will follow your advice. Ordinary riding-togs are the best thing for a long ride like this, and if it's absolutely necessary, one can add a pot-hat and a black coat before entering Bellaviste," and to this decision he

adhered, in spite of the Premier's remonstrances and of Cyril's jeers.

It had been arranged that the king and his companions were to ride the greater part of the way to Bellaviste, escorted by the Thracians who had accompanied M. Drakovics, and most of whom had brought horses with them; for although a railway from the frontier to the capital was nearly completed, it was not yet open for passenger traffic. It was a picturesque procession which wound down the mountain-side, headed by Caerleon and M. Drakovics; but when the level ground was reached the symmetry of the march was much disturbed, for the younger men among the Thracians broke the line out of pure gladness, racing their horses against one another, and riding hither and thither on either side of the main body. Whenever a village was reached, the inhabitants were summoned to the church by the ringing of the bell, and Caerleon, standing on the steps, was proclaimed king by M. Drakovics. Everywhere the people poured forth to meet the party in delight, bringing offerings of bread and salt, which were to be touched by the king and afterwards consumed by the givers.

On these occasions Cyril generally remained in the background, afraid of being caught laughing, as he told M. Drakovics, to the no small indignation of the Premier. Wright shared his objection to publicity, but for a different reason, feeling very uneasy in his mind as to the whole proceeding, now that he understood its import, and not at all sure that it was consistent with his duty to Queen Victoria to become a subject of Caerleon. There was an unhappy consciousness of something wrong about his whole aspect, which would have afforded Cyril infinite amusement at any other time; but now, as from his

commanding position on horseback he watched his brother's close-cropped fair head towering above the unkempt locks of his new subjects, he was busy trying to enter into the feelings of the Thracians. Mothers brought their children to look at Caerleon, for good luck, as they said, "that their eyes might see the king's face"; old men came tottering up to touch his coat or his riding-whip, and to call down blessings on his head. It was too absurdly medieval, thought Cyril, as the office-bearers of the little towns came hurrying to take the oaths of allegiance to their new king, and the peasants crowded round to entreat him to raise an army to conquer Scythia, in which every man of them would enlist. Why should they make all this fuss about an unimaginative Englishman, who only looked uncomfortable when a more than usually fervent assurance of devotion was translated to him, and who could say nothing in return but that he would do his best for the people and the country? There could be no idea of Divine Right in this case, for how could such a sentiment consist with the popular election of the monarch? and as for loyalty, how could they feel loyalty to a man of whom they knew nothing? that he was an English prince, whom M. Drakovics vouched for as a suitable candidate for the throne. Cyril decided at last that he regarded Caerleon as the incar- nate of the spirit of the late revolution and a protection against Scythia the return of the House of F but the Thracians themselves probably have explained this light much more simply by that they had a king at last, was young, good-looking, a soldier, and that he spoke clearly and looked like a soldier.

After three days of this travelling the party came

of Bellaviste, and at this point they were met by what M. Drakovics called the "Sacred Band," but which was known to military critics as the crack regiment of the Thracian army. It had been recruited on the classical principle, the men being divided into little groups of five or ten, all hailing from the same village, while in the same way each company represented a district, and each battalion a province.

"This regiment, your Majesty," said M. Drakovics, as he presented the officers to Caerleon, "is the backbone of your army. Representative, from its composition, of the whole nation, it was the first to declare for freedom, and when it did so, the doom of the House of Franza was sealed. I can assure you that the Sacred Band, to which, with your gracious permission, I will from to-day grant the honour of calling itself the Carlino Regiment, will prove to be the bulwark of your throne."

The grant of its new name was received with great enthusiasm by the regiment, which was formed up for inspection, and this ceremony over, proceeded to escort the king into his capital. M. Drakovics, riding as usual beside his sovereign, pointed out the chief features of interest on the road. The city of Bellaviste itself was situated on a hill, which rose steeply from the river, but fell away gradually on the other sides. The highest portion of the hill was occupied by the palace, which with its gardens was surrounded by a strong wall capable of defence against a foe unprovided with artillery. Below this, on three sides, the houses of the town sloped down to the lowlands, with a broad rampart running round the whole, set with towers at intervals.

"That is all our work since the revolution," said M. Drakovics, pointing to this rampart with pride. "Under the Franzas, the money

voted for fortifications was all spent on useless batteries along the river-front, which no foe would think of attacking, while the town was left defenceless."

"I don't think you are giving King Peter the credit he deserves," said Cyril. "If his batteries on the river-face are well placed, he ought to be able to command the whole channel, and his position would be most important in view of a European war. Matters would be very much in his hands, for unless he chose, the Pannonian gunboats could not get out to sea, nor could the Scythian war-ships get up the river. His great danger would be that of being taken in the rear. I suppose he meant to see to that when he had finished his batteries."

"Our views were not so exalted, milord," said M. Drakovics. "Safety was our great consideration, and when we were free our first thought was to erect a wall, which, if it could not stand against modern artillery, would at any rate serve to resist any insurrectionary attack."

"And to whom is the defence of the wall intrusted?" asked Caerleon. "To the Sacred Band?"

"No, indeed," answered the Premier. "Their barracks are two miles away from the city, on that farther hill. The people were afraid that if their king had a regiment at his command in Bellaviste, he might use it to overthrow the constitution. The city is garrisoned by the city guard, which is entirely composed of young men belonging to Bellaviste families. One company of this forms the palace-guard, with a very elaborate uniform and special rights. It was the favourite corps of King Peter Franza, and we scarcely expected that its members would fall in with the new state of things, particularly when we were forced to deprive them of some of their privileges. But the officers are all staunch—we took care of that."

"Did your care extend to giving the palace-guard as many occasions of discontent as possible?" asked Cyril. "You owed the success of your revolution to the co-operation of the army, and the army must be very dense if it has not learnt the lesson. What you will have to guard against in the future is a military revolt, and it sounds to the uninitiated as though you were carefully preparing one."

"We were obliged to deprive the guard as far as possible of its power of mischief, milord. In its former state it was a standing menace, but under its present officers it is excellently affected to the Government."

At the gate of the city the Sacred Band handed over its escort duties to the guard, which was paraded for the king's inspection, after which all the troops fell in for the march through the streets. The houses were gaily decorated, and the windows and roofs crowded with people, who welcomed Caerleon with shouts of joy. It was still early in the day, and M. Drakovics had arranged a programme of events. Orders had been sent forward to prepare for the coronation; but it was found impossible to complete the arrangements before the morrow, and all that could be done to-day was to visit the hall of the Assembly, in order to receive the loyal addresses of the Legislative body, and their oath of allegiance. Then followed the reception of addresses from the municipality of Bellaviste, and as many other local authorities as had been able to get them ready in time; after which came lunch at the Hôtel de Ville, and a state progress through the town. More receptions followed this, and the events of the day concluded with a parade of the palace-guard in the courtyard of the palace. It needed all M. Drakovics's powers of persuasion to induce his sovereign to conduct a third inspection after his

round of duties; but he represented so forcibly the disappointment which would be felt in the city if any slight were offered to the guard, that Caerleon yielded. They were a fine body of men, wearing a very handsome, if somewhat foppish, uniform, and their officers were seasoned old soldiers, whose aspect presented a curious contrast to that of the rank and file. A speech, translated by M. Drakovics, was necessary here, and this duty performed, Caerleon entered his palace with a sigh of relief. Owing to the delay in the coronation arrangements, which included a state banquet, nothing had been fixed for that evening, except that the town was to be illuminated later on; and though M. Drakovics would have liked to linger at the palace and talk international politics, Caerleon's disinclination for further conversation on the subject was so pronounced that he found it impossible to stay, and the brothers were left alone.

"Call this being king!" said Caerleon, when he and Cyril met at dinner in the comparatively small room which they had chosen out of the wilderness of state apartment as their dining-room when by themselves, for there were few regular court officials at present. The chief functionaries had all gone into exile with the late king, and it had been possible to appoint their successors as yet, so that matters in the hands of such of the important officials as had adopted cause of the revolution. They not yet acquired the reverence which would have been those whose places they had to maintain their position as king as long as etiquette required in spite of his disinclination their society. According to their sovereign intimated their attendance was not further

that night, and it did not strike Caerleon that even the freedom he now enjoyed would have been impossible in a properly constituted court. "I call it being a slave, no less," he went on. "What a luxurious beast old Franza must have been! I never saw anything like the rooms up-stairs. Well, if luxury could compensate him for all the bother and fuss, he deserved it."

"'Uneasy lies the head——'" began Cyril.

"Oh, shut up, and don't quote moral platitudes," said Caerleon, wearily. "I tell you what, Cyril, there are two things we'll do. We'll look out some attic place where we can smoke in peace, with two chairs in it and a rug on the floor, and we will break through that absurd rule of never going out without an escort. I mean to do the Haroun-al-Raschid business, and poke about a little *incog*."

"All right," said Cyril; "I'll be Grand Vizier. We will get hold of a couple of fur caps and these Thracian cloaks with fur collars, and have some fun. Shall we begin to-night with the illuminations, or are you fagged out?"

"I don't see why we shouldn't," said Caerleon. "Root out some cloaks, will you? There are servants enough, and it's a charity to give them something to do. It'll be all right if we are in by eleven o'clock, when some of those chaps from the town are coming to serenade us."

Through the medium of Wright, who was preparing very reluctantly to resign the care of his master's belongings into the hands of the new servants and return to his natural sphere, the charge of the stables, Cyril procured the required disguises, and he and his brother wrapped themselves up and slipped out. The palace was built round a square courtyard, in the midst of which stood the rude little chapel

of St Peter, where the workmen had been busied all day in making preparations for the coronation. The servants were all at supper, and the guards in their own hall, only the sentries were to be seen, and Caerleon and Cyril stole along in the shadow, giving the pass-word when it was demanded, and reaching the gardens in safety. A private gate, to which they alone possessed a key, supplied them with a means of exit, and they descended the steep street and mingled with the crowd which was admiring the illuminations. These were more ambitious than successful, and though the Thracians were full of delight, Cyril turned up his nose at the display, and commented on it in disparaging whispers.

"It is rather slow here," said Caerleon, stopping short suddenly. "Let us go and look up the O'Malachys."

It was in Cyril's mind to say, "I wondered how soon you would get to that," but he held his tongue, and followed Caerleon to the Hôtel Occidental, the whereabouts of which the king had discovered in the course of his progress through the town. Keeping their cloaks well up to their faces, they passed through the hall without being recognised, and were conducted up-stairs to the O'Malachys' sitting-room, where they found the Herr Oberst himself, Louis, and Nadia. Madame O'Malachy was suffering from a bad headache, and had gone early to her room.

"Indeed ut's very condescending in your Majesty to come and see us like this," said the O'Malachy, when he had apologised for his wife's absence. "Sure 'twas only an hour ago I was saying to Louis here, 'What will we do about paying our respects to the king? Will we call upon um, or wait until he sends for us?' And we couldn't make up our minds about ut at all."

"That's not true," said Cyril to himself. "I'm pretty sure you decided to wait until Caerleon came and looked you up, which you guessed he would do before long."

"For pity's sake," said Caerleon, sinking into the chair which Louis pushed towards him, "leave the kingdom alone for a little while, O'Malachy. I am sick to death of it. Here, at any rate, let me have a little respite."

"As you please," said the O'Malachy, with a gracious wave of the hand. "I suppose a king may take a holiday like other people if he wants ut. You will find Liberty Hall here, whenever you like to look in."

Caerleon sighed contentedly, and leaned back in his chair. The room looked comfortable and home-like, very different from the gorgeous solitudes at the palace. The O'Malachy, white-haired and soldierly, with a sly twinkle in his eye, was the picture of a courteous host. Nadia sat close by, under the gas, with her work; and Louis, buried in a Ballaviste weekly journal, seemed less out of harmony with his surroundings than usual. The place was a haven of rest. But rest in itself was not sufficient for complete happiness, and Caerleon's state of contentment did not last long. Cyril, watching from the background, was no better pleased. Before the evening was over, he had lost patience altogether with Nadia. Why did she sit there stiffly, in the full blaze of the gas, working with unremitting assiduity at some coarse and unlovely garment for the poor, and refusing to answer any remark except in monosyllables? She would not take Caerleon into the conservatory to show him the flowers, as he asked her, nor did she respond to her father's suggestion that she should point out to him the view

from the balcony. There she sat, never looking up, sewing away as if for dear life, and acting as an effectual damper on the conversation of the rest, while Cyril was longing for a smoke with Louis and his father, and one or two of the latter's stories, which were not altogether suited for ladies' ears. All Caerleon wanted was to be left alone with her, but she succeeded in baffling all his efforts, and Cyril waxed furious over her foolishness. Did she really imagine that by dint of coyness and coldness she could keep her lover from making an open avowal of his feelings? Surely she must know that he would insist upon a plain answer, and that it would be impossible to put him off for long! Caerleon would hear her decision from her own lips at one time or another, and the sooner she dismissed him and bade him turn his mind to other subjects the better.

These thoughts were seething in Cyril's brain all the evening; but Nadia remained unconscious of their import and as immovable as before. The only time she exhibited any animation was when the brothers rose to go.

"You have not seen much of this place yet," she said to Caerleon as he bade her good-night, "but I have gone about a good deal yesterday and to-day. There is plenty for you to do. The drunkenness is awful. You begin your work before you."

A chuckle from Louis followed her eager speech, and Caerleon no opportunity to say more than that he would give his best attention to the matter, before he hurried him away. They passed through the streets in silence, reached the palace without attracting notice, and after a patiently a long performance the town band, went to the

RECENT FRENCH NOVELS.

"J'AI cessé d'espérer, j'ai cessé de souffrir," is a very appropriate motto to find at the head of a modern French novel, and it pretty accurately describes the sentiments of a stupefied and discouraged reviewer, when, after having perused some three dozen volumes of contemporary fiction, he reaches the melancholy conclusion that his chances of discovering what he seeks are about as great as of meeting a white elephant in a drove of mangy cattle. If we throw overboard the large cargo of those deadly dull romances, whose contents are but a monotonous revolving circle around the most well-worn and threadbare of the ten commandments, we find that very few stories nowadays have been written with the old-fashioned *raison d'être* of giving pleasure, for mere pleasure, as being something far too simple and direct to satisfy the demands of our complicated *fin-de-siècle* nerves, is fast losing its market-value. To inform an author that his works are amusing, would be paying him but a sorry compliment, since to produce pain or nausea, to destroy his readers' sleep, and, if possible, disturb their digestion, seems a far grander and more desirable object to the true up-to-date French novelist.

As an excellent specimen of this class of morbid literature, a perfect gem of tabid sentiment and chlorotic pathos, we can warmly recommend 'L'Étranger,' by Jules Case,¹ from whose work the above-quoted motto is taken. The hero of this story is a certain Dr Marsy, who, by some mysterious law of nature, finds himself doomed to the posi-

tion of an outcast and a stranger amongst his fellows; passing through life without ever having tasted of its pleasures, and side by side with love without being warmed by the flames. He himself, being a physician, explains the fact of this strange isolation by the circumstances of his birth. His father had been twice married, and each of his unions had produced a son, our hero being the junior by fully twenty-five years. Having therefore, he argues, as the son of an old man, made his entry into the world fully a quarter of a century later than nature had intended, he belongs by rights to a former generation, and is therefore paradoxically excluded from sympathy with those who outwardly would appear to be his contemporaries, despite all his painful efforts to remove the invisible barrier between them. His superficial worldly minded mother, and his gay, pleasure-loving step-brother, puzzled and distressed by these abnormalities which they recognise without being able to explain, hope to cure him by an early marriage. Through their solicitude he becomes engaged to a charming young girl, whom he sincerely loves and who has accepted him of her own free will; but after a year's engagement Marsy voluntarily relinquishes his claims upon Berthe, having recognised that he has not succeeded in warming her heart, and that every mere passing acquaintance who touches her hand has greater power to stir her blood than he whose wife she had promised to be. From this time for-

¹ L'Étranger. Par Jules Case. Paris: Ollendorff.

ward Marsy retires definitively into his shell, and withdrawing to Nice, where he has purchased a villa, devotes his days to the arduous exercise of his profession among the poor, and his evenings to mournful reverie over the cruel vagary of that fate which has doomed him to live amongst men without being one of them. A scrap of conversation between Marsy and his mother, which takes place towards the end of the book, will more clearly serve to explain his position:—

"Some business obliged him to return to Paris. He had not seen his mother for over two years. She had not aged perceptibly, was still a good-looking woman, full of youthful vivacity, and affected elegant light-coloured dresses. He, on the contrary, seemed to be catching her up and overtaking her. He appeared to be the elder of the two, a fact which, in Madame Marsy's *salon*, gave rise to many remarks and comments very flattering to the lady. It seemed to her droll to say 'my child' to this respectable middle-aged gentleman, whom one of her most intimate old friends had had difficulty in recognising.

"She frankly acknowledged to her son that she had never understood him. How could he continue to live there alone without object or ambition? She felt convinced that under similar circumstances she would become an idiot or insane within a week. Silence and want of movement would be her death.

"She assumed a mournful expression—

"'You have made a mess of your life, my child, and why? . . . I rack my brains in vain. . . .'

"'Do not break your head, *ma mère*; you will never guess. You are now only repeating what you said when I was eighteen years old; you have not changed since then, neither have I. It is true that I ought to have succeeded; I am sufficiently intelligent, diligent, rich, and with interest. I would simply have

required to follow the stream, to let myself go—in a word, and in order to make use of an expression of general application, "do as other people." I have not done as other people, simply because I am not like them. I do not deem myself superior on that account—on the contrary, perhaps; but I was and have always remained thus. Of two roads, you instinctively choose the right one and I the left, and so on.'

"'But why?—wherefore?' exclaimed Madame Marsy. 'For what reasons? Name them.'

"'There are reasons. I believe to have discovered those that are peculiar to me. Perhaps I am mistaken. One thing, however, is certain—that is, that they do exist. Let us acknowledge them, and say no more about it. But, *ma mère*, do you imagine that I am the only one in the like position—the only stranger? The expression is a well-chosen one, and it is you yourself who applied it to me one day when I disconcerted two women—you and my affianced bride. In your light-hearted Parisian gaiety you ignore many things. Your eyes are dazzled by flames and dimmed by ashes. Your sense of hearing is acute; but if your ears are singularly hospitable, if everything enters therein, nothing remains there. You have no comprehension but for your own evanescent pleasures, your nervous excitements, which seem to you to fill infinite spaces, and which at scarcely two paces collapse inertly like wingless birds; and you make an outcry of singularity against whoever does not resemble you. . . . I am not the only one who would surprise you. There are thousands as thousands of us on the civilised ear who are like each other—brothers in virtue of this one point of contrived solitude. We are strangers and solitaries—why? From different reasons which may be either of social or psychological nature: the reason the same, we do not fit into the frame of actual society. What offers does not tempt us. It is made for us. Another and another state of society would, however, produce other solitaries. There are always outcasts, and I am one

order. Whence are these outcasts recruited? Of many varieties of men. Of fanatics and unfortunates, misplaced ambitions which have not known how to bow before the inevitable; super-ardent imaginations, mystics who spend their days praying in dim church corners and their nights prostrate on the cold boards of their garrets; of beggars who prefer alms to uncongenial work; of criminals, too, such as lately burnt Paris during the Commune, and who will do it again. Do you know, *ma mère*, that between I, your son, and one of those criminals there is no other difference but that of temperament; he loses his head, and seeing everything in red he wants to kill. I practise charity' (the last word was emphasised by a sneer). 'Intrinsically we feel, we suffer alike. We are solitaires — strangers — unknown companions of one another, but marching by different roads towards a common ideal, always marching, because destined never to arrive.'

Marsy at last meets a woman who, from having likewise been marked out by fate as a sort of outcast, is drawn to him by a kindred feeling of sympathy. Juliette Loran has been sent to Nice with a view to arresting the ravages of consumption, which within a couple of years have metamorphosed her from a brilliant young beauty to a sort of walking skeleton, incapable of arousing any other feeling but a sort of shuddering compassion. Her husband, having loved her solely for her beauty, can no longer endure her presence; and she herself, on realising this fact, has voluntarily exiled herself from the society of her fellows:—

' "What is life?" (she says to Marsy, when soon after their first meeting he impresses upon her the necessity of combating the disease instead of weakly succumbing). 'Life is only the interest which we have in existence, and if that has ceased to be? When you have become a being whose mere presence is sufficient to disturb the pleasure of

others, to arrest the laughter on their lips — when you guess that around you every one is longing for your absence — when you feel that you have become irksome even to those who loved you, who still know how to pity, but who tacitly reproach you for the grief you are causing them, when in order to prevent those others from taking flight you take flight yourself, putting yourself aside as a pest-stricken creature. It took me two years to understand this. But now I swear to you that I am no longer afraid of death. I let it come.'

"Marsy listened with stupefaction. Was not this a misfortune, analogous to his own? The sick woman's serious voice struck home to his heart, rousing painful reflections. He, too, by his sole presence cast a shade over gay social gatherings, and wherever he approached mirth fled. Where others were received with smiles he met with but icy countenances. He, too, was an obstacle, had felt himself oppressed by the hypocritical compassion of those dear to him, and in order to forestall the flight of those others, he had fled himself. It had taken all his youth to realise that he had been *born* as a stranger, as this poor woman had become a stranger. Fate and disease had accomplished a similar work in each case, had pronounced a like sentence of excommunication, had banished them to the extremities of the world into those sterile lands where human fraternity, based upon a system of mutual exchange, finding nothing to reap, ceases to exist.

"The doctor threw a long mournful glance on the afflicted woman. His heart overflowed with compassionate affection. Silently he resolved to offer his assistance, his consolation. . . . Juliette met his glance with indifferent eyes which gave no response. He noticed how carelessly her hair was twisted up under her hat, her soiled and faded gown, her face whose devastations might have been partially concealed by some harmless powders and cosmetics, her figure slack and graceless.

"She was the woman who has ceased to regard her appearance, pervaded throughout with a suicidal perfume.

"'Within three months she will have ceased to live,' thought Marsy."

His doctor's eye soon penetrates the true cause of Juliette's torture, for beneath her corpse-like exterior the instinct of love still lives ardently and consumingly; and arguing that only the resurrection of her self-confidence can help her to overcome the disease, he conceives the bold idea of employing love as a medicine. At first he does not feel the least touch of human love for this dying woman, being solely actuated by a species of scientific compassion as he feigns the looks and language of an ardent admirer so successfully as completely to dupe her. Believing therefore that she is still capable of appearing desirable to the other sex, Juliette begins to revive; her eye grows brighter, her bearing more erect, and at passing moments of excitement or pleasure Marsy seems to see, as in a vision, a passing reflection of her vanished beauty. He now begins to be seriously enthralled by his patient, and tells her so; but Juliette, labouring under the delusion that if she is still capable of rousing love in one man she can do so in another, leaves Nice abruptly to return to her husband. She soon discovers the fallacy of her hopes, and a few months later is brought back to Nice in a really dying condition. Her heart now belongs to Marsy in good earnest, and she expects his love to repeat for her the miracle of which she had not known to take advantage the first time. But it is now too late, and the last fifty pages of the book give us the exceedingly nauseous spectacle of a courtship in which passion and disease contend for the upper hand up to the very edge of the grave. The dying

Juliette has but one desire—belong permanently to the man whom she loves; but as he hesitates to accomplish their union, she feverishly implores him to take her away to some distant country where she can recover health and happiness. He, as a doctor, knows that her days are counted; but not having the heart to deceive her, he feigns consent to her wishes, and a ghastly sort of elopement ensues in which the lover is kept in a state of continual terror lest an untimely jolt of the railway-carriage should jog his mistress into her grave, a colder breath of air waft her off into eternity.

Luckily for him, they only go as far as Ajaccio, and there, sitting beside the open window, in sight of the dancing blue waves flooded over with golden sunshine, Juliette expires, her hand clasped in his, the very moment when she believes that her happiness is about to be complete.

"Marsy broke into sobs, but understood that he would henceforth be happy, if without desire, with hope for the future, he returned his solitude faithful to the poor woman who, exiled from love by the rest of mankind, had been the only one to love him."

Feeling the imperious necessity of an antidote to this sombre and depressing story, we eagerly turn upon '*Les Vieilles Rancunes*,' by Georges Ohnet, for this popular author is always at his best in his least pretentious works. Nevertheless, on the contrary, he makes the mistake of taking him too seriously, and seeking to gain laurels on the same field as Bourget or Maupassant, he becomes stilted when he intends to be eloquent, and melodramatic.

¹ *Les Vieilles Rancunes*. Par Georges Ohnet. Illustré de quatre-vingt deux par Simonard. Paris: Ollendorff, 1895.

when pure tragedy is aimed at. We never particularly cared for the famous revolver scene in 'Serge Panine,' where the hero is shot down by his energetic mother-in-law; nor is it possible to get up much enthusiasm on the subject of Claire de Beaulieu, when, in the concluding chapter of the 'Maître des Forges,' she saves her husband's life by stopping up the mouth of his adversary's pistol with her own lily-white aristocratic little hand. But when Monsieur Ohnet, abandoning pistols and pathos, condescends to be simply amusing and natural, he very often succeeds in giving us a pleasant half-hour.

The subject of 'Les Vieilles Rancunes,' an old maid's grievance against the man who had refused to marry her in her youth, is scarcely a new one. We have met with this theme a score of times before; but after all that is no reason for objecting to a twenty-first edition, if served up in lively and agreeable fashion.

Clementine Guichard and Fortuné Roussel, first cousins, had been co-heirs of a certain bachelor uncle who had bequeathed to them his very considerable fortune, in equal parts, on condition that they would make a match of it, so as to obviate the necessity of dividing the money, stipulating moreover that whichever of the two proved intractable to the proposed arrangement should forfeit his or her portion. Clementine, who had always entertained a secret *penchant* for her handsome cousin, is joyfully resigned to her fate; but Fortuné is unfortunately of another opinion, caring little for marriage in the abstract, and still less for its embodiment in the person of his cousin Clementine. Being, however, of a good-natured disposition, and unwilling to disobey his defunct uncle's wishes, he

honestly tries to conform to them, and it is agreed between the cousins that Fortuné is to visit Clementine every evening with a view to getting attached to her.

"Unfortunately, however, Clementine's fashion of being amiable had something violent and peremptory about it which set Fortuné's nerves on edge. She seemed to be saying, 'I am gracious towards you because you belong to me. My favours are but the consequence of my power over you. I am fond of you as I am fond of my dogs, my parrots, or my servants, when they caress, amuse, or serve me well. But woe to you if you do not do everything to please me.' And as the deuce would have it, precisely this form of affectionate tyranny was that of all others most displeasing to Roussel, who, very lively, very independent, was not at all inclined to let himself be governed even by a pretty woman. For Clementine, aged twenty-three, was agreeable-looking, despite a certain masculine character which found expression in the thickness of her eyebrows, the vigour of her profile, the strength of her voice, and certain energetic movements which might have been attractive in a *cantinière*. She was, moreover, tall and well built, with a clear olive complexion, magnificent eyes, beautiful teeth, and admirable black hair.

"How, with these attractions, had she remained without admirers, and was on the point of wearing St Catherine's cap? Fortuné found the explanation in few words. 'She conveys a sense of anxiety and constraint; one seems to be paying court to a man. . . .'

"Every evening Fortuné went over to drink a cup of tea at Clementine's house. She made herself sweet and seductive to receive him, and regularly each time when she had installed him in his place in the chimney-corner Roussel would say to himself, 'Really she is not bad-looking after all!' And on his side he made every effort to break through the ice that seemed to rise up between them as a natural barrier. All would go well during an hour, then the stock of Clemen-

tine's amiability and the reserves of Fortuné's patience having gradually run dry, they came to contradictions, discussions, and acrimonies, and the cousin beat a precipitate retreat from his relative, saying to himself, '*Mon Dieu!* how disagreeable she is!' She, on her side, was distressed at his desertion, would sigh and reproach herself for her quarrelsome disposition, for she was well aware of her shortcomings, and resolved next day to do everything in order not to disturb their good harmony. But she never succeeded."

On one occasion, after a more than usually violent scene with her cousin, whose apartment she had invaded with the intention of effecting a reconciliation, Clementine has a fit of hysterics and falls down on the sofa, a prey to a nervous paroxysm:—

"Fortuné, who was goodness itself, rushed to her assistance, and although rewarded by sundry kicks and cuffs, did not suffer himself to be repulsed, but began to unlace her dress. She only emitted some feeble moans. He conscientiously deluged her temples with eau-de-Cologne, and made her inhale a smelling-bottle. As he was still bending over his cousin, she reopened her eyes, recognised him, sprang up with a bound, and hurling a furious parting glance at him, she said, turning back once more on the threshold—

"I beg you to take note that I was the one who made the first step towards conciliation. I shall await your final answer this evening. Think well over Uncle Guichard's intentions, and see whether you choose to risk the chance of disobeying him."

"She had again become hard and crabbed, and at this moment appeared to Fortuné to be conclusively unattractive. Deeming it necessary to burn his boats in order to cut himself off from all retreat, he answered in a very suave tone of voice—

"The only risk that I run, dear cousin, is to see you take my share of the inheritance. Take it, then, and welcome; I consider that my liberty is not too dearly bought at this price."

"These words were the cruellest that she could have heard from him. Clementine's face grew convulsed, a raising a trembling hand to the forehead of Fortuné's face, she replied—

"Very well; you will rue the answer for life. From to-day forth regard you as my most mortal enemy."

"Perhaps she hoped for a revulsion of feeling, brought about by apprehension. But she had selected precisely the worst means in order to win back Roussel. He did not answer. He merely bowed, opened the door for his cousin, and when he had seen her down the staircase, returned to his room, where, taking place again in his arm-chair, he relighted his pipe, and resumed the reading of his evening paper."

Clementine now applies herself methodically to the task of hating her cousin with all the strength of her vigorous nature, and her hatred is strong and implacable in proportion as her former love for him had been deep and sincere. The next twenty years of her life accordingly devoted to annoy and checkmating her deadly enemy by every imaginable expedient which feminine ingenuity can devise. She spreads injurious reports regarding his reputation, drives away his favourite domestics, builds high walls on the property adjoining his own in order to exclude the sunshine from his houses; and when Fortuné adopted Maurice Aubry, the orphan of a deceased friend, Clementine promptly procures for herself a daughter. Then, when Maurice, about twenty-four, a dangerous accident causes him to be taken in and tended by Mademoiselle Guichard, and there he sees falls in love with Hermine, adopted niece. Clementine, learning the young man's name, demands that he shall be with his adopted father, for on that condition will she con-

to his marriage with Hermine. By Roussel's advice Maurice feigns acquiescence to the old maid's wishes, but it has been secretly concerted between them that as soon as the marriage ceremony is safely over, Fortuné Roussel is to steal a march on his adversary by suddenly appearing on the festive scene in the character of a wedding-guest, and trusting to chance, surprise, and general emotion for arranging matters. The scene of meeting between these two ancient lovers is amusingly described, although its humour is scarcely up to date, and forcibly suggests the low comedy of some forty or fifty years ago:—

"She opened the door, and, with proud bearing and assured mien, entered the room where Fortuné awaited her. . . .

"The opening door made him turn round. Clementine, proud and majestic, but little changed, stood before him. For an instant they examined each other in silence. She found him handsome; with his full, fresh-coloured face, appropriately framed in luxuriant white locks, he could still be called a fine-looking man, elegant, with the suitable grace of middle age.

"With irrepressible bitterness Mademoiselle Guichard thought to herself, 'He does not seem to have much suffered.' In response to his smiling salutation, she returned but a slight and formal inclination of the head as she said—

"Sir, this is a visit which I did not expect, and which has every reason to surprise me.' . . .

"Life is full of such surprises, my dear cousin,' he returned, suavely. 'Delighted, I am sure, if the present one seems agreeable to you.'

"Do you wish to mock me, sir?"

"The moment would be badly chosen.'

"Oh, I know your tact and delicacy too well in order to feel much confidence.'

"*A la bonne heure!*" exclaimed Roussel, laughing. 'Now I see that

you are not changed—at least so far as character is concerned.'

"Sir!" exclaimed Clementine. 'Do you dare to treat me with impertinence in my own house?'

"God forbid! my dear cousin. If you have remained morally the same, outwardly that is not the case. You have greatly changed to your advantage!"

"Spare me such sickly flattery," interrupted Mademoiselle Guichard in a softer tone of voice, 'and deign to explain the object of your present visit.'

Roussel's explanations are, however, deemed insufficient by the vindictive old maid, who has determined to pick a fresh quarrel with her exasperatingly polite cousin:—

"Turning to Roussel, she said with biting scorn—

"In short, you have come hither solely guided by egotism? You said just now that I have not changed. You have also remained unaltered.'

"I am modest, and do not wish to claim exceptional privileges for myself.'

"You, however, possess an exceedingly rare one—that of forgetting injuries when it happens to suit your interest.'

"Christian humility.'

"I have known you less forbearing.'

"One grows calmer with age.'

"Yet I have insulted you sufficiently.'

"You are the only one to remember it.'

"And the wall which I caused to be erected along your garden boundary?"

"Proved exceedingly useful for training fruit-trees.'

"And the valet to whom you were so much attached, and whom I bribed away from service by heavy gold?"

"He was beginning to grow careless.'

"And the discredit I contrived to throw on your reputation?"

"I had no objection to pass for a rake.'

"In short, all that I have done these last twenty years in order to

prove my hatred, do you mean to say that it has been done in vain !'

" 'I only saw therein the proof that you could not forget me.'

" 'Insolent man !'

" 'Adorable woman !'

" She had sprung towards him with face convulsed by passion, flaming eyes, and upraised hand ready to strike. He stood there impassible and smiling. She looked at him for an instant wildly, asking herself whether she were not victim of a nightmare—all that she had seen and heard since a quarter of an hour seemed too absurdly fantastic. But Roussel did not melt away like an apparition ; he stood his ground, and said with much self-possession—

" 'My dear cousin, I think that you must now have exhausted your stock of bad words. Do not try to find any more in your reserve fund, for it would be useless. Pray understand that if I determined to face you, it was because I felt sure of myself. You will not succeed in putting me into a rage ; all the abuse in the world can have no effect on me. Therefore, give up the idea of provoking a scandal. You will have to resign yourself. I am here, and, as an illustrious general has said, "Here I shall remain."'

" She saw herself defeated, and, emitting a dull cry, all her blood rushed violently to her head. It seemed to her that the room was revolving around with extraordinary rapidity. She stretched out her arms in order to grasp for support, and heard her enemy exclaim—

" 'Ah well ! An attack of congestion for a change !'

" And then she fainted away. When she recovered consciousness she was half reclining on the sofa, the *corsage* of her dress unhooked, and Roussel, holding her hand, was bending anxiously over her. After the lapse of twenty years she found herself in precisely the same situation as on the evening of their former rupture."

These few extracts will give a sufficient idea of the light bantering tone in which the story is told,

and we will not forestall the reader's enjoyment by following up step by step the various phases which these two ancient lovers have to pass through before reaching the tardy conclusion that nature and fate had all along intended them for each other.

Revived and gently refreshed by the perusal of a book which can neither cause depression nor excitement, we feel able to grapple with one of Monsieur Edouard Rod's remarkable but profoundly gloomy studies of the human heart. In his latest work, '*Les Roches Blanches*,'¹ we find, indeed, all the grace of style, subtle analysis, and delicate workmanship which characterised this author's former works, such as '*La Sacrificée*' and '*La Vie Privée de Michel Teissier*'; but, paradoxically enough, precisely the recognition of these qualities that formerly compelled our admiration brings with it a certain feeling of disillusionment on the present occasion. Is it indeed possible, we ask ourselves regretfully, that a musician capable of executing such exquisite symphonies should have no other tones at his disposal but those plaintive minor notes, which, however thrilling when first heard, must necessarily weary the ear by incessant repetition ? Can it be true that the great culinary artist who delighted our palate by the full concoction of one fascir dish should already have exhausted his menu ? "*Tout perdrix*" is a dreary prospect even the most ardent admirer of that admirable bird must concede, and although the pathetic of the "*femme incomprise*" doubt very great, it is yet to get an overdose of the f

¹ *Les Roches Blanches*. Par Edouard Rod. Paris : Perrin et Cie

ing creature. After reading two or three of Monsieur Rod's novels in succession, one is almost tempted to wonder whether the race of young girls has completely died out of fiction; or if, in order to aspire to the position of heroine in a French novel, it has become a *sine quâ non* for a woman to be married and miserable.

It is needless to say that in this, as in all the author's previous works, we make acquaintance only with most excellent and worthy people. The hero is noble and disinterested, the heroine pure and high-minded, and it is equally superfluous to add that these exceptionally perfect mortals meet with the wretched fate which, according to Monsieur Rod, would seem to be the obvious and inevitable reward of virtue here below.

The charming and unhappy heroine of 'Les Roches Blanches' is a certain Antoinette Massod de Busseur, wife of the richest and most important man in a small Swiss country town. Antoinette, one of those frail sensitive women composed entirely of feelings and nerves, has been incongruously mated to a coarse phlegmatic spouse, gifted with the obtuseness of a bullock, the serene self-conceit of a peacock, and the appetite of an ogre, so that when, after half-a-dozen years of wedded stagnation, she comes across her spiritual affinity in the person of the newly elected young Protestant parson, the result is almost a foregone conclusion. Henri Trembloz is the son of common peasants, having raised himself to his present position by his own intellectual gifts, and notably by a remarkable oratorical talent. His old mother, who has accompanied him to his new home in the capacity of house-keeper, has, however, retained all her rustic instincts and habits, and,

although keenly alive as to the necessity of keeping up the dignity of her son's position, declines to relinquish such congenial occupations as cooking and scrubbing in order to acquire fine-lady habits. Her portrait, touched off in a few words, puts her vividly before the reader's eye:—

"Henri was vaguely asking himself in what manner their common life would develop when his mother returned, carrying a loaf of bread and some parcels. The fatigues of the laborious morning had not oppressed her. He, Trembloz, felt heavy headed and weary limbed, from having got up too early, from having worked his muscles during his march alongside of the luggage-cart, whose rattling sound along the road still reverberated in his brain. The old peasant-woman, on the contrary, despite her sixty-five years, was brisk, ready for action, a trifle harsh, it is true, but merely because such was her natural disposition,—for no other reason. Short, square-shouldered, of masculine build, with sinewy hands, and locks of black ungrizzled hair framing in her face, tanned by many alternations of sunshine, wind, and rain, she evoked the idea of a little oak-tree with twisted trunk, whose tenacious roots, firm and deep, spread out to fret the neighbouring trees.

"She instantly began to complain of the baker, who assuredly cheated by giving short weight; of the butcher, into whose shop she had looked in passing just to inquire the prices, and whose meat seemed to be tough; of the grocer, with whose shopboy she had already contrived to pick a quarrel. She got excited as she described the episode—

"'They think to treat me as they choose, because I am a simple peasant woman!' she said; 'that is because they don't understand with whom they have to deal. But they shall see—they shall see, soon enough! Oh, they shall see!'

"With a threatening gesture she shook her hard head, whose sharp features seemed to cut around her like a knife-blade. Trembloz listened

to her silently, with newly aroused uneasiness in his eyes, recognising the formidable character which he so well knew, and afraid of the hostilities which already were threatening.

"I told them that I was the mother of the new pastor," she continued, "then they became a little more polite. You understand it is here a question of not allowing ourselves to be sat upon. It is not the same as at La Vallée, where you were only temporarily, and where the regent had you in his pocket, as I have heard. Here, my boy, you are settling down for long. We must make ourselves respected. Ay, ay, even though we are only peasants. And everything depends on the first day. You know the proverb—As you make your bed so you sleep."

"While speaking, she bustled about, so that their dinner was soon ready—a meal devoid of pretension; plates and glasses placed on the bare table without any attempt at arrangement or comfort."

But scarcely has the hungry and exhausted young pastor satisfied the cravings of nature than his energetic mother forces him *volens* into his best clothes, and sends him off to pay his respects to the chief notabilities of the little town of Bielle, where some fifteen years previously, as a barefooted urchin, Henri had come in from the country to frequent the public schools.

At first coldly and somewhat suspiciously received by his congregation, Trembloz achieves a triumph by his eloquence in the pulpit; and the first sermon he preaches in church not only wins for him by storm the respect and sympathies of the people, but likewise the heart of Antoinette de Massod:—

"As he closed the large Bible people remarked that he had no papers beside him, and instantly some new remarks were exchanged—

"He has not got any notes.' . . .

"He knows it by heart.' . . .

"Is he going to improvise?' . . .

"Oh! oh!"

"He began to speak, very slowly at first, as though he were seeking his words, in a feeble voice, without gesticulation; then by degrees his voice grew firmer, more sonorous, filling the vault of the old temple, while his ample gestures strengthened the meaning of his phrases, making him appear transfigured, as in those days when tongues of fire rained down on the apostles. Once more the mysterious power of the living word performed its miracle. All that just now had been humble, paltry, pitiable about this poor pastor was effaced in a sort of illumination. He ceased to be a timid peasant, timorous and bewildered; he was the minister of God. He appeared to have grown beautiful, with that divine and pathetic beauty that we see on Rembrandt's figure of Christ standing in the midst of the Temple desecrators, with a beauty which suddenly achieved for him the conquest of all hearts. Whispering had ceased—no one moved; panting, stupefied, petrified, they followed or tried to follow the orator's high flight of thought, through the current of noble phrases and crystallised metaphors. The men exchanged approving glances, endeavouring, however, to retain a remnant of free judgment. Quartier, the syndic, who, contrary to his habit, had not fallen asleep, remained gaping, his open mouth resembling a large hole in his big red face, the gigantic stomach vibrating in front of him; Doctor Mathorel had at the outset thrown a triumphant glance around, which clearly said, 'Was I not right, you pack of idiots?' But now, hypnotised like the others, he bent forward as though to quaff the flow of holy words from the living stream; M. Pidoux, having taken off his gold-rimmed spectacles, held them absently in his hand, forgetting that without them he could see nothing; M. Sorder, with head thrown back and moving lips, had half closed his eyes; Tiercet, the notary, fixed an motionless, might have passed for some gaunt wooden figure of Gothic sculpture, forgotten there by tim-

without the two large tears that coursed down his withered cheeks. As to the women, more passively submissive to the gift of eloquence, they struck ecstatic attitudes, using their handkerchiefs to choke down their sobs, or betimes strangling a sort of suppressed wail which reverberated through the vaulted aisles. Madame Massod de Busseur, with blanched face, seemed to be near a fainting fit. . . .

"Alone the pastor's mother remained outside this enthusiasm, which she recognised without being drawn into it; her small piercing eyes kept running in all directions, questioning all faces, and not missing a single detail of this triumph.

"Indifferent, however, to the immense effect he was producing, Trembloz went on without faltering, without weakness, as though carried along by an invisible force, perhaps not even conscious that he surpassed himself and touched the summit of eloquence—for this oration, long dreamt of, was in reality but the echo of his whole interior life."

The immediate result of this brilliant sermon is an invitation to dinner from the important and consequential M. Massod de Busseur, on which occasion Trembloz and Antoinette make the troubling discovery that they have understood each other from the first glance. Their intimacy grows apace, at first without any consciousness of wrong-doing or foreboding of evil, and once or twice they meet by accident in a little copse adjoining M. Massod's garden, marked by a couple of rocks of fantastic outline. Some one relates to Trembloz the legend of these two stones, known in the country by the name of "*Les roches blanches*," and which are supposed to be the petrified forms of two faithful lovers who, many hundred years ago, had lived and loved unhappily. Divided on earth, they had each sought consolation in religion, the knight turning Trappist in a mon-

astery whose ruins are still shown at the foot of the Jura, while the lady took the veil in an adjacent convent. Apparently, however, these respective retreats had been imprudently selected as regarded their mutual vicinity, or else monastic rule in those days must have been sadly lax, for the *ci-devant* knight and his lady-love used to meet every night at the self-same spot to which Trembloz and Antoinette are now irresistibly drawn. The two medieval lovers fight bravely against their growing passion, which as yet has been untainted by any actual wrongdoing, and on the evening when for the first time their lips had met unawares, they registered a solemn vow never again to come hither, in order to keep themselves pure from the crime which seems inevitable. But scarcely have the words of eternal farewell been spoken between them than a torpid sensation begins to creep over their limbs. The soil which had witnessed their love-making keeps them back against their will, and some mysterious terrestrial influence binds them to each other for evermore. In their heroic struggle against love humanity was dead within them:—

"'Their souls had conquered but had perished in the struggle, and there remained of them now but two stones, insensible for evermore. The White Rocks. . . . Is it not a pretty legend?'

"Deadly pale, Trembloz murmured—

"'Very pretty.'

"'And full of signification,' went on Mr Leen. 'Do you not find it so? Just think! Supposing they had surrendered to their guilty passion, what would have happened? They would have been eternally damned, I suppose. Subjected to some of those fearful tortures invented by medieval imagination; plunged, for instance, in the terrible whirlpool by which the lovers

of Rimini are carried off. But then they would not have been changed into stones. And which of the two fates would have been better?"

This legend is but an allegory to foreshadow the fate of the two modern lovers, who, like their prototypes, resolve to meet no more as soon as they have recognised the danger in which they stand. Scandal has already begun to make free with their names, and called to account by her incensed husband, Antoinette confesses the truth. Yes, she loves Trembloz, but has had no idea of breaking her marriage-vow, and she weakly and submissively accepts the sentence which compels her to leave Bielle for a few months in order to give people time to forget the story. Exhausted by the mental struggle she has gone through, Antoinette feels powerless, paralysed and almost indifferent as to the future. And Henri, too, is conscious of a like moral depression. His heart is bruised, his head empty, his limbs feel torpid and heavy, as though in truth the transformation of the White Rocks was going to be repeated for him. Vainly he tries to comfort himself by the reflection that he and Antoinette have done their duty; but the consciousness of innocence fails to bring consolation to his soul:—

"Where was then that interior joy held out by certain oracles on the reward of sacrifice? He would have sought it in vain in his poor tortured heart; the struggle had been too violent; the triumph too much resembling certain victories without sequel, which exhaust the conqueror, leaving him weaker than his enemy. As he thus raked up his grief, seeking to discover in it the expected ray of consolation—from the depth of his soul there sprang up, as though to deride his misery, the mocking visions of eschewed crime, brilliant visions

which served to extinguish the consciousness of their self-chosen irrevocable lot, stretching out before him empty and hopeless amidst desert horizons, like those which swallow up perishing caravans.

"He murmured—

"'Later on, God will send me peace.'

"But his lips alone pronounced these words, for in his heart there continued to echo the fatal sentence—

"'. . . They would not have been changed into stone!'

"And dimly, without seeking to formulate the uncertain idea which was beginning to outline itself in his bruised head, he seemed to realise the fate of those men who have too much soul to ignore love, too much virtue to abandon themselves to it in thoughtless joy—who, whether falling or resisting, are equally doomed to suffering. The light they carry within them must perforce either consume them or else be extinguished, and if they do not become the guilty victims of their heart, it is only because that heart is destined to turn to stone."

This concluding paragraph, so essentially characteristic of Monsieur Rod's method, would by itself suffice to identify him, even without any previous knowledge of the work, for it is invariably his system thus to sum up the underlying idea of his story in the form of a vague and undefined complaint against fate (or Providence?), which, like a long-drawn wailing note concluding a dreamy melody, seems to reverberate in the reader's ear even after he has closed the book. This pretty trick (for it is no more than a trick) was both effective and impressive in Monsieur Rod's earlier works; but the expedient palls by repetition, and it is distinctly disappointing to discover that the author has got but 'one drop-scene in his possession. Yet more disappointing is to perceive from perusal of a successive works that the delicate suggestive philosophy, which attracted us on former occa-

in reality owes its origin to deep and incurable pessimism. That wrong-doing necessarily brings its own punishment, even upon the innocent descendants or relatives of the original perpetrator, was the maxim expounded in 'La Sacrifiée' and 'La Vie Privée de Michel Teissier,' but 'Les Roches Blanches' goes a step further, by proving that right-doing entails no reward whatsoever, and that consequently, according to Monsieur Rod, whatever we may do or leave undone in this world we are fatally doomed to misery in some shape or other.

It is the critic's precious and unquestionable prerogative to be captious, paradoxical, and unreasonable; so having just now fallen foul of Monsieur Rod because of his being too invariably like himself, we now feel inclined to pick a quarrel with Monsieur Daudet for no better reason than for having in his latest work, 'La Petite Paroisse,'¹ attempted a totally new literary departure. To those who have revelled in the vivid character-painting and sparkling dialogue of 'Le Nabob' and 'Numa Roumestan,' who have been touched by the realistic pathos of little Jack's history, or carried away by the irresistible drollery of 'Port Tarascon' and 'Tartarin sur les Alpes,' this morbid study of conjugal infidelity will appear singularly at variance with the gifted author's peculiar vein of talent. It is essentially a theme à la Bourget or à la Rod which M. Daudet has here elected to treat; and throughout the book, despite the pleasure afforded by many admirable intermezzos and quaint flights of fancy, we are continually haunted by a sense

of uneasy dissatisfaction akin to what might be produced by the sound of a flute as interpreted by lips hitherto used to contact with the more vigorous cornet-à-piston.

"Jaloux n'a paix ne soir ne matinée" is the motto intended to give the keynote to the story, in which once more the old, old question is aired as to whether the erring wife is to be divorced, killed, or forgiven by the outraged spouse. Daudet elects the last and most Christian-like solution of the problem, and expends much ingenuity in attempting to prove that, when the frail woman has been purified by a suitable course of penance and suffering, she may hope to regain her husband's affection and esteem. The title of 'La Petite Paroisse' is taken from a little church erected by Napoleon Merivet, an eccentric philanthropist, in memory of his deceased wife, who had sinned and been forgiven; and he has built it with the benevolent intention of teaching other equally unlucky spouses to draw consolation from the same source as himself. As might, however, be expected, few men are sufficiently sublime to appreciate the founder's pious intentions, and the deceived husbands of the neighbourhood have hitherto preferred to wipe out their dishonour in the old-fashioned barbarous style. The little church has been mockingly dubbed "La Paroisse du bon cocu" by the local wits, who mockingly affirm that its dimensions would be all too small to contain the large congregation of those whom conjugal misfortunes would entitle to a seat within its hallowed precincts.

Richard Fenigan—hero of the present tale—does not seem to be

¹ *La Petite Paroisse, Mœurs Conjugales.* Par Alphonse Daudet. Paris: Alf. Lemerre, 1895.

a likely candidate for this sort of religious consolation; and when there comes upon him like a thunderbolt the news that Lydie his wife has eloped with Prince Charlexis, son of his aristocratic neighbour the Duc d'Olmütz, his first instinctive thoughts are all of murder and revenge, and he has only an incredulous smile for old Napoleon Merivet when the latter prophesies to the younger man that he too one day will alter his way of thinking, and come to recognise that peace can only be restored by patience and forgiveness, but never by violence and bloodshed.

"'There are unpardonable injuries,' growled Richard between his teeth. 'The outraged man strikes and revenges himself. In this question I side with Shakespeare against the Gospel.'

"'Ah, yes! Shakespeare! Othello! I read that in order to study the question when I myself was attacked by the same disease; but he understands nothing about it, your Shakespeare. His Othello is not a jealous man, but simply a negro; tropical blood, brutal and passionate—that is all. The true mark of jealousy when it attacks a being is to render fierce the weakest, abruptly to initiate the most innocent to all possible vices, to bestow upon virgins and angels a diabolical fertility of imagination and familiarity with all the catch-words of debauch. In order to make Othello true he would require, when attacked by jealousy, to be possessed by the perverse and envious soul of Iago, who is the real jealous man of the play. The stroke of genius here is to have made of him a mulatto, to have handicapped him with an inferiority of race tantamount to ugliness or deformity.'

And on another page, where Napoleon relates how, when having pursued his wife and her lover with the intention of cutting their guilty throats, unsuspected he enters the hotel bedroom where she is plunged

in slumber, the author takes the opportunity of firing another shot, this time addressed against his illustrious colleague the late Alexandre Dumas:—

"'Then, yes — I thought I was about to strangle her in order to take her away from that man; but as I bent over her, wholly possessed by this ferocious desire, she was shaken by one of those long half-sobs like a child that has fallen asleep, scolded and unhappy. I then saw that her eyes were red, the lids swollen with tears, and a great pity took hold of me; all my rage melted away before so much weakness and irresponsibility. Ah! it is all very well for him that other one, grand manufacturer of phrases, when, with a sweeping theatrical gesture, he says to us, 'Kill her!' and, moreover, one would need to have the instinct of murder, a cowardly soul, and the hands of an executioner. . . . I regained the door without turning round; an hour later I had left the place.'

Very good is likewise the adroit blow dealt against the morbid and demoralising influence of Russian literature, towards the end of the book, although such sentiments placed in the mouth of a simple country priest lack all semblance of probability. The Abbé Cérés, when asked to define the reason of his antipathy to Dostoiewsky, replies:—

"'I owe him a grudge for having brought the Russian pity into fashion.'

"'The Russian pity! What do you mean by that, my dear Abbé?'

"'I mean that unjust and one-sided pity, only applied to rogues and trulls which seeks to move us exclusive with regard to the hardships of penitentiary settlements and other evil places, though misfortune were only toucht in combination with crime and degradation—that is what I call the Russian pity. We have all known plenty of honest women, wives of labourers, waiting themselves out in care for their children and household, silently during blows and privations;

when Dostojewsky throws his Rodion at the feet of an outcast girl who, in his eyes, symbolises all human misery. I find that he dishonours misfortune and calumniates humanity."

In Prince Charlexis, the companion of Lydia's flight, Daudet has given us a carefully drawn study of precocious perversity, which for the honour of humanity we would fain believe to be over-coloured. The portrait of the youthful Lovelace *fin de siècle* has often been drawn before, but surely never with such pitiless scorn and uncompromising realism as in the present case? Scarcely eighteen years old, Prince Charlexis (according to the author's own words) already combines the experiences of a renegade priest and of a superannuated *danseuse*. With a complexion like milk and roses, his soul is already black and wrinkled as that of the oldest debauchee; and ere a suspicion of down has had time to overshadow his baby lips, he has exhausted every sensation which dissipation can produce. His victims can be reckoned by scores, and he registers them as coldly and methodically as a practised sportsman sums up his bag of game.

This is how Prince Charlexis, writing to an intimate friend, describes his latest caprice:—

"Scarcely thirty years of age, long-cut clear eyes constantly lowered, and which when raised illumine her face with pearly reflections; an air of reserve; large white musical hands encased in old-fashioned mittens. No children; a husband who adores her; and the whole country's esteem. I only required to write to her 'Come,' and she answered 'I fly!' and there she is abandoning all, household, home, family, in order to embark with a companion as youthful and as unsteady as your friend. Am I not right in saying that women are queer birds?"

In these confidential letters to an intimate friend, which take up a large portion of the book, the youthful monster, while keeping us *au courant* of his various love-intrigues, likewise takes the opportunity of exhaustively airing his views upon men and morals. Although we deem it highly improbable that a young man such as the one here described should take the trouble thus to fix in writing all the workings of his black little soul, we will not cavil at this rather barefaced literary stratagem, since it furnishes opportunity for interpolating many shrewd reflections and touches of semi-fantastical worldly wisdom in which we gladly recognise the Daudet of old, as for instance the following, where the Prince writes from amid the military circle into which he is thrown for a time during his service as volunteer:—

"I ask myself whether all these gentlemen who are so eminently effective for purposes of escort and parade be really warriors, and how they would comport themselves on a battle-field? Brave—*parbleu!* Every Frenchman is brave when he feels himself looked at. But determined, capable under fire of lucid and spontaneous action? That remains to be seen. One needs to have faced death in order to be able to answer for one's presence of mind assailed by time and circumstances."

Here is another passage drawn from the same correspondence:—

"I here enclose a dual-coloured chalk sketch which Borski, the forger of the 50th Dragoons, had begun of my most precious countenance. As you can see, the likeness was already striking. Only, by that law of subjectiveness which we discussed one day, and by reason of which my fat tailor, despite all my remonstrances, persists in furnishing his customers with bulging waistcoats, this passionate Borski has put into my eyes

something of the fanatical ardour of his own, thereby changing my whole expression. I saw this unfortunate youth again, in the barrack-yard the morning when he had to pass down the parade after his condemnation to penal servitude. This sinister and theatrical ceremony of degradation beneath a rainy sky, in this square enclosure of black walls, dripping men and horses, seemed to make but small impression on him. When he passed near me, his tunic thrown across the shoulder, with head erect, I was struck by the far-off expression of his glance and thoughts. One felt him to be thousands of miles removed from all prisons, smiling ecstatically at the woman for whose sake he had become a criminal. It is this self-same flame which most erroneously he has bestowed on me.

"Ah no! There are no flames in the eyes of our present generation, are there? We do not burn for love any more than for the fatherland. And whose fault is it? You, my philosopher, querist, and bookworm—it is in the fogs of German metaphysics that you have drowned your imagination, your warmth, and your sunbeams; you accuse the books of having prematurely enlightened and withered you. But then we others, the narrow-minded and frivolous ones who do not read or study, at that rate we should have preserved intact the hearth of loyal belief, whereas it is just the reverse. Probably those heavy volumes which have brought you disenchantment do not require to be opened in order to be known; the despairing ideas which they contain, so to say, in the germ, have taken form and dispersed, and we inhale them with each breath of air and life; we absorb them with every pore. Whenever, for my benefit, you have quoted one of the beautiful heart-rending axioms of your philosophers, I have said to myself, 'But I know that already.' Therein lies one of those inexplicable phenomena which, without our being able to grasp the system of propagation, transmit the news of any great event from one end of the desert to the other. That is why we all, without exception, ignorants like myself or wiseacres like you, we are

equally tainted by satiety and exhaustion, vanquished before the battle, moral anarchists in whom the courage of action is wanting."

As might be expected, Lydie is quickly abandoned by her youthful seducer, whose doting parents carefully shield him from the husband's vengeance by sending him to rejoin his regiment; and Richard, now that his wife is deserted and unhappy, undergoes a revulsion of feeling that is virtually the first step towards the sanctuary of 'La Petite Paroisse.' If Lydie has inflicted on him the greatest injury which woman can do to man, he argues, were there not extenuating circumstances which go far to redeeming her fault? A tyrannical and narrow-minded mother-in-law, a dull country life, which the timid and monotonous devotion of a blind unsuspecting husband had proved unable to relieve. Had Lydie been happy she would have remained virtuous, and her divergence from the right path had been solely brought about by circumstances which might have been avoided by the persons whose duty it manifestly was to keep guard over her happiness. In a violent and powerful scene with his mother, Richard gives vent to these sentiments:—

"'Take care, *ma mère!*' he cries out at last, goaded to passion by her bitter taunts.

"He seized hold of her wrists, turned her violently towards him, and placing his convulsed features quite close to the old woman's face, that was so like his own, he thus disburdened himself—

"'The torment of my life it is you—you, do you hear, not she? Since my childhood, which you imprisoned in a sick-room, depriving it of air and of movement, your selfish love has prevented me from developing, from becoming a man. In order to keep

me near you, you have tyrannised me as formerly you tyrannised my father: you have flattered my indolence and my vices, you have shut off from me every career. In order to keep me single, that there might not be another influence but your own, you would have pushed me to debauch. . . . Yes! As if I had not clearly seen it. . . . And that other poor creature whom you fetched from Loreint, short of throwing her into my arms, what have you not attempted in order that she should become mine illegally, and only illegally, seeing that her husband is still alive, and that our Church does not acknowledge the divorce, rather than see back here the one whom your despotism has banished, and of whom you have always been jealous? Ah! your religion is an admirable one indeed: your conscience is governed by a fine sort of Pharisaism. But you will gain nothing, nothing. I love my wife, do you hear?—I love and I forgive her, for I myself am guilty of not having defended her from you, from your cruelty. Weep!—yes, weep! She is weeping still more bitterly—she who is abandoned, I know not where. Oh! But I will find her again. Rather than continue the existence I drag on here, far from her, face to face with you, I would stab myself with these shears. Here goes—"

"Richard, my child!"

"He would have snatched from her the heavy garden-scissors; but, prompter and more skilful, she flung them away to the far end of the hot-house into a tangle of crushed flowers and broken plants."

Horror-struck at realising the harm she has unconsciously helped to do, Richard's mother, after a sharp tussle with her pride, goes in search of her erring daughter-in-law, and brings her back to the home she had abandoned six months previously. This occurs about the middle of the book; but just when it seems that the reconciled couple have nothing more to do but to fall into each other's arms, indefinable obstacles rise up to keep them apart:—

"Lydie, when he entered the room, was standing before the window, which looked out upon the snow-clad landscape. Against this white background her figure detached itself, full and graceful, moulded in a pink wool-len gown: her lovely head, sharply defined against the light, was surrounded by a halo of fair fluffy rings, and her pearl-grey eyes were dark and clouded. He stopped, surprised at finding her young and beautiful as in his most passionate dream, and with, moreover, a new and unknown stamp of sensuous grace, acquired elsewhere, perhaps in the arms of another man: a pernicious perfume, which equally drew and repelled him, intoxicated him with love and with furious rage.

"Motionless, at two steps from her, it seemed to him that if he approached, if he but touched her, his fingers must inevitably close garrottingly round that dove-like throat in order to punish it for those other caresses. At the same time a frightful burning pain below the heart made him realise that the old disease had reconquered him, and he was seized with profound despair in face of the impossibility of recommencing their life together, since in his wife's very beauty lay the germ of the disease, and he felt that he must go mad with jealousy each time he looked at her; and all these sensations which traversed him, sudden and violent, were summed up in a great longing to weep. He lowered his head, and in a muffled voice, with a trembling of the under lip, said, '*Bonjour, Lydie.*'

"That was all he could find for this longed-for moment."

For a long time it would seem as though Richard and Lydie were never to get beyond this formal *bonjour*; and even after Prince Charlexis has been removed from the scene in tragic fashion, his shadow still appears to stand between them. Richard is suspected of having murdered the Prince, and Lydie herself believes her husband to have committed the deed. The real murderer, however, presently discloses himself in

the person of an old gamekeeper, who in the dark had fired the shot, intended to avenge another woman's honour. Richard, restored to liberty and love, resolves, after a final tussle with the demon of jealousy, to bury the past; and the story, closing to the sound of church bells and the perfume of incense, gives us an edifying tableau of the reunited couple attending Sunday service at the *Petite Paroisse*.

This too perfectly satisfactory conclusion cannot, however, satisfy any serious student of human nature; for how is it possible to accept the situation as final, or suppose that a man in whom the instinct of self-torture has been thus strongly developed should succeed in permanently keeping the green-eyed monster at bay?

Almost the self-same theme as that of '*La Petite Paroisse*' has lately been treated by another French novelist of the realistic school, M. Paul Marguerite, who, in a story entitled '*La Tourmente*,'

gives us a study of far greater psychological veracity, pointing to the hopeless but inevitable conclusion that certain poisons can never more be repelled from blood once tainted, and that jealous love of the sort described can only be cured by the death of that love itself.

It is, moreover, very evident that Daudet himself has been all along conscious of the weakness of his arguments, and that, feeling himself incapable of supporting them unaided, he has here invoked the assistance of religion merely as a means to an end. But the pious atmosphere, which he has been at such pains to create, lacks the stamp of reality; it fails to carry conviction with it, and, despite the lavish employment of organs, incense, church bells, and pious *curés*, we close the book with more than a lurking suspicion that the god of '*La Petite Paroisse*' is but, after all, the *Deus ex machina* of an ingenious novelist.

THE LEGEND OF THE GARDENER.¹

BY BEATRICE HARRADEN.

THERE was once, in the ages gone by, a gardener, of rare patience and discernment. He would go out into wild places, and stooping down, would detect some tiny plant of no moment to careless eyes, and would bring it home to his garden, and tend it with such loving care that it would gain in strength and beauty, surprising and gratifying him with its generous response to his tender fostering.

People heard of his beautiful plants, and came to his garden.

"Ah, you indeed have a rare plant here!" they would say, pointing to one of his treasures; "that must be priceless in its worth."

"No, indeed," he answered; "it is just a wild flower, nothing more. There are thousands like it."

"But if *we* bring the wild flowers home, they die," they answered. "How is that?"

"I cannot tell," he said; "unless it is that I care so much, and that I have put my very heart's desire into the tending which I give them day after day, and week after week."

Now one day the gardener was in trouble: great sorrows had encompassed him, and the bright light had faded from his life. It was nothing to him that his garden was beautiful, and that the fame of it had travelled first to one land and then another, and that many strangers sought to learn the secret of his subtle skill. All this was nothing to him. Heavy-hearted he went about his work, finding

neither peace nor comfort, until one early morning, when he was wandering listlessly in the desert, weaving round his soul a network of sad thoughts, his eye chanced upon a tiny white flower. There was something in the whiteness of it which held him for the moment spellbound: it was as white as the surf of the fairy Pacific: as white as an untouched field of Alpine snow: as white as one's ideal of a pure mind.

He stooped down and deftly raised its roots, and forgetful of all his sorrows, hastened home with his fragile burden.

But, alas! it was so fragile that at first he did not dare to hope that it would live. It drooped and drooped, and the gardener knew that he would lose his treasure.

"If I could only have saved it," he thought. "I have never cared for any flower so much as for this one."

Well, he saved it. And when at last it raised its head and smiled to his care, he felt a gladness unspeakable.

"Little friend," he whispered, "I found thee in an hour of sadness, and together with thee I found courage and consolation; *and therefore I name thee Friendship.*"

It grew up strong and beautiful, white as the surf of the fairy Pacific, white as an untouched field of Alpine snow, white as one's ideal of a pure mind.

Of all the plants which the gardener cherished, this one called

¹ Copyright in the United States of America.

Friendship far outshone them all. Strangers could never pass it by without a tender word of praise, and without asking the name of this plant which looked so chaste and calmly beautiful; and when they had learnt its name, they all wanted it. The rich were willing to pay any price for it, and those who had not money, would fain have offered the best service of their lives, their brains, their hands.

But the gardener smiled always and shook his head.

"Nay," he said, "I cannot sell it, neither for money nor fame nor anything which the world may hold. It is my very own—part of my own self. But go ye out into the wild places, and ye will see many such plants. There they are for every one to take or leave. Only have a care in the lifting of them, and in the nursing of them. They are very frail. Still, if you use every care you know, your little white flower, Friendship, will grow up strong, revealing to you all the time new beauties and fresh delights. At least, thus it has been with me."

Then, so runs the legend of the gardener, those who were eager enough to take the trouble, wandered into wild and lonely places and found the tiny white flower, as they thought. But they often gathered the wrong plant, and took it triumphantly to the gardener.

"See here," they said, "we have had no trouble with this flower. From the very first it flourished and grew apace."

The gardener looked at it and smiled sadly.

"So many have made that mis-

take," he said. "This is not the plant Friendship, but merely its counterfeit, which after a time loses its whiteness, and then it could not deceive any one."

But others who came to the gardener had indeed found the real Friendship, only they could not rear it. They brought their faded plants to him and pointed to them sorrowfully.

"Mine did so well at first," said one of the strangers. "I felt so confident of success."

"Perhaps thou wert too confident, and thus became negligent," said the gardener, kindly. "If thou triest once more, remember that thou must never relax thy watchful care."

"Ah, how can I ever hope for success now?" said the stranger, sadly. "My heart is sore with disappointment."

"One never knows," said the gardener, "and if thou shouldst ever tend another plant, hasten to tell me how it has fared with thee and it."

The gardener lived to know that many, taught by him, had learned to find the fragile flower Friendship, and to rear it with success: some had failed once and twice and thrice and then succeeded, and others had failed altogether. But there were many who had divined his secret, and he was glad. For he knew how much the world would gain of whiteness.

Then he died, and it is not known to whom he bequeathed his own beautiful plant.

Maybe you have it; perchance I have it. It is surely amongst us somewhere.

THE BOOK OF ANNANDALE.

Who shall say how many of the vast battalions of books produced during that century of which the last sands are now running through the glass are destined to a permanent place in English literature? Sir William Fraser will be slow to suspect flattery in the verdict that assigns a durable one to the remarkable series of volumes which he has compiled during the last forty years. He has done for Scotland what other writers may come to do for other countries, but which nobody has done for them yet. Memoirs of isolated families have been published elsewhere, notably Mr De Fonblanque's sumptuous history of the House of Percy; but Sir William has covered the whole ground of Scottish history in his series of feudal and chivalrous families, and has stored up such an amount of national lore, local tradition, personal anecdote, and familiar and official correspondence, that it can hardly ever come to pass that later historians will fail to resort to his works as an inexhaustible source of information. References to "Fraser" in future histories will be as frequent as those to "Fordun," "Hemmingburgh," or "Hailes" in those of past years.

Sir William's latest volumes¹ have for their scene what was for centuries the cock-pit of the kingdom—the western Border and the Debateable Land, and, for their subject, one of the Border clans which figure foremost in the troubled history of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In former

memoirs he has dealt with the families of Douglas, of Maxwell, and of Scott; Mr Armstrong has already published one volume of 'The History of Liddesdale,' which tells about the stormy fortunes of the Elliots, Armstrongs, Irvings, Bells, Nixons, Jardines, and other subordinate septa; and now the field is covered by the Annandale Book, with the story of the Johnstones in all their branches.

A word may be spoken in passing regret for the form in which, after many variations, this ancient name has come to be spelt, with a final excrescent *e*. It is true that there is ancient authority for it—such authority as may be claimed from the arbitrary practice of early scribes—for Gillebertus de Jonistune appears as a witness to a charter by William de Brus of Annandale between 1194 and 1214. But in another charter by Robert de Brus (father of "the Competitor") three or four years later, the name of the same witness is given as Gilbertus de Joneston. All through the middle ages, and onwards to the close of the seventeenth century, the name appears in many variants—Jonystoun, Johnneston, Johnstoun, Jhonstoun, Johnnstoun, &c.—according to the caprice of the writer, and comparatively seldom with the final *e*. In a list of 414 persons for whom Sir John Johnstone became surety in 1586, most of them bearing his surname, there occurs only one example of "Jonstoune"—the knight's own name appearing as Schir Johne Jonstoune. The dis-

¹ The Annandale Family Book of the Johnstones, Earls and Marquises of Annandale. By Sir William Fraser, K.C.B., LL.D. 2 vols. 4to. Edinburgh, privately printed, 1895.

advantage of fixing on a different orthography from that of other Scottish territorial names, such as Hopetoun, Houston, and Morton, is that the historical etymology is lost sight of. John, father of Gilbert de Joneston above referred to, received a grant of land early in the twelfth century from the first or second De Brus of Annandale. This land was in the heart of De Brus's great lordship; and, just as "les sires de Bruis" derived their title, afterwards contracted into Bruce, from the lands of Bruis near Oberbourg, so this John called his new property "John's toun," became John de John's toun, and his son succeeded him as Gilbert de Johnstoun. The transition from the territorial to the personal form of surname can be plainly traced in the documents of this family. In 1476 James III. writes officially "to oure louettis Schir Robert of Crechtounne [Crichton] of Sanquhar, knight, Johne of Johnneston of that ilk," &c.; but Johnstone grants a precept of sasine within a few weeks of the same date, calling himself "Johannes Johnnestoune de eodem."

It is more than two centuries after the foundation of the family in Annandale before its chiefs appear as taking any part in public affairs. The head of the house signed the Ragman Roll, like every other Scotsman of good degree (except one William le Waleis), but successive generations can only be traced by their diligence in witnessing deeds, holding inquests, and discharging other duties of a country gentleman, till in the year 1378, as Wyntoun records, one of them did good service on the Borders.

"When at the wattyr of Sulway,
Schyr Jhon of Jhonystown on a day

Of Inglis men wencoust¹ a gret dale.
He bare hym at that tyme so welle
That he, and the lord of Gordowne,
Had a sowerane gud renown
Of ony that was of thar degre,
For full thai war of gret bounte."

By this time the Johnstones were no longer vassals of the Bruce. Robert I. had conferred the lordship of Annandale on his nephew, Sir Thomas Randolph, as well as that of Man and the earldom of Moray. With Randolph's only daughter, "Black Agnes of Dunbar," Annandale passed into the hands of Patrick, ninth Earl of Dunbar and March. But as the fourteenth century waned, all stars paled before the dazzling constellation of Douglas, and in 1409 Archibald, fourth Earl of Douglas, became feudal superior of Annandale. Adam of Johnstone bore a part in the battle of Lochmabenstane on October 23, 1448, when young Percy and 6000 Englishmen were routed on the banks of the Sark.

Sir William Fraser does not explain the significance of the name Lochmaben Stane, which students of Border history not unnaturally connect with Lochmaben, a very different place. The Lochmaben Stone, constantly mentioned in early writings as a trysting-place, not only for Scottish troops intended to undertake or repel invasion, but also for business meetings between the English and Scottish wardens, will be found mentioned in Rymer's 'Fœdera' (vol. iii. part 4, p. 152) as Clockmabanstane, which reveals the true origin of the name as the Gaelic *clock Mabuin*, Mabon's stone. It was formerly surrounded by a circle of large stones, and doubtless marks the burial-place of some leader named Mabon. Dumfriesshire was once a Welsh-speaking district, being part of the territory

¹ Vanquished.

of the Strathclyde Britons. In modern Welsh *mabon* means "a young hero," and is the endearing term applied by the Welsh miners to Mr William Abraham, M.P. for Rhondda Valley. There are three warriors of this name mentioned in the early Welsh poems, one of whom is stated in the 'Book of Taliessin' (xviii.) to have made a raid on the district of Dumbarton in the end of the sixth or beginning of the seventh century, and to have perished afterwards at

"A battle on this side of Llachar
... on the fair portion of Reidol."

Llachar and Reidol seem to be identical with Lochar and Ruthwell, both within a few miles of the Lochmaben Stone, and it is probably from this hero that both the stone and the lake, twenty miles apart, take their names.

But we must hark back to historic times.

It is by no means easy to trace the fortunes of a house, not yet of the first magnitude, through the perplexing page of Scottish chronicle. Thus, although "the lard of Jhonstounis twa sonnys" seized the king's castle of Lochmaben in 1454, James II. allowed them to keep it, and next year the Johnstones are arrayed on the king's side in the operations which finally crushed the House of Douglas. From this date the clan of Johnstone constantly increased in importance, and during a century and a half may be traced the growth of their rivalry with the Maxwells of Nithsdale, which culminated in a tragic series of events at the close of the sixteenth century.

To understand the origin of this celebrated feud, it is necessary to remember the value attached to the wardenship of the West Marches. Not only did the possession of this

office designate the holder as the chief baron of the district, who happened to be at the same time reasonably loyal to the king, and invest him with the dignity and authority of a viceroy, but it also carried with it solid emolument derived from fines levied on evil-doers in the Warden courts. Now, chief among these evil-doers were the Armstrongs of the Debateable Land. There was bad blood between the Johnstones and the Armstrongs arising out of the slaughter, in 1527, of "Mikill Sym Armistrang" by the laird of Johnstone and his men. But the Maxwells and the Armstrongs were ancient allies, and Lord Maxwell, who was then Warden, would not allow letters of outlawry against the Armstrongs to run within his wardenry. He did more than this. The English Warden, Lord Dacre, ever watchful to foment discord between the Scottish Border clans, gleefully reported to Wolsey that "the Lord Maxwell caused the said Armistranges to make a roode upon the lard of Johnston, his oun sister son, who is at dedely fede with them for the killing of Mikill Sym Armistrang; where they killed thre of his friends, and the Lord Maxwell hymself laye in a busshment to manteigne them, purposely to have killed the saide lard of Johnston if he had pursued them."

In revenge Johnston promptly raided Maxwell's lands of Drumcow, burning everything before them and driving off cattle. The king exerted himself with some success to patch up this quarrel, and for a time Maxwell and Johnston were both on the side of law and order. Johnstone and Edward Maxwell, the Warden's brother, set to work thief-catching, and in 1532 bagged a notorious offender known as George Scott

of the Bog. This ruffian was accused of more than common outrages, having not only robbed and murdered men, but burned their wives and children alive. He was taken to Edinburgh, where the king, to make an example of him, ordered him to be burned alive at the stake, "quhilk deed," observes a contemporary diarist, "was neuer sene in this realme of befoir, nor will not be heirefter." To which Amen! say we all; although, as will be seen, this was not the last example of similar barbarity.

The good understanding between Johnstone and the Warden was snapped in 1534 by the slaughter of "Rowe Armestrang, Red Dandeson, by certain of the name of Johnstone." Besides his official obligation to do justice on the murderers, Maxwell was deeply incensed at this outrage on a clan which had always been protected by his people, especially as the deed was done close to his own house, "in Carlawerock mire."

In 1536 three Johnstones fought two Moffats and a man called Gyrie Panago in the presence of James V. The reason for this is not given, but it is probably the last instance on record of judicial ordeal by battle. The Johnstones won, though one of their number was killed, and only one of their opponents survived. Johnstone was in prison at Dunbarton for some offence not specified when the Scottish army was defeated at Solway Moss in 1542, but he was released immediately after, and made Warden in room of Lord Maxwell, who had been taken prisoner.

Wharton, however, the English Warden, proved an overmatch for him. He sent forty light horsemen to burn the village of Wamphray, which was well within view

of Johnstone's castle of Lockwood, and placed 300 men in ambush "thinkynge that the lard Johnstone wold come to the furst to vyew them, and so he dyd and persued them sharplye to their ambushe." After a severe struggle the Warden was taken, though not till three spears had been broken on him and he had been wounded in the thigh. Upwards of 140 of his men were made prisoners: "There was viij Scottis slayne and many hurte. There ar four Englishemen hurt, never one slayne nor taken."

The traveller, reclining at his ease in the Caledonian express, may sigh, as he is whirled past the sloping pastures of Wamphray at sixty miles an hour, for the stir and glorious hazard of those old riding days; or, if he be of milder mood, may thank God that those times of rapine and ruin are past, and that the worst enemy the Border farmers now have to fear is foreign competition.

Wharton employed all his arts to tempt his prisoner from his allegiance, and flattered himself he had succeeded. "I trust yet," he wrote to Somerset, "to cause thos Johnstons be with others a scourge to the Maxwellis and ther bandis." But Johnstone himself gives a better account of his loyalty. In a petition to the Scottish Government for aid to pay his ransom he describes the rigours of his imprisonment successively in Carlisle, Lowther, Pontefract, Whartonhall, and Hartlie. He declared they "layit irlis¹ and fettaris vpoun and trubillit me thairwith, in sic maner that I behuivit to ly on my bak with all my clathis on my body alsweel be day as nycht. . . . Intending to haif gottin me secretlie distroyit thai gaif me evill and unhailsum

¹ Irons.

metis and drinkis, and throu eting and drinking thair of I tuke havy seiknes, and lay therein be the space of six owkis¹ in parrell of my life;" notwithstanding all which he refused to entertain the "mischewose purpose proponit" to him by the English Warden "towart the hurt and destruction of this realme."

There is a pathos and flexibility in this appeal, which would be greatly impaired by reduction into the rigid and monotonous orthography imposed by school boards. In fact, the spirit of the correspondence of this period evaporates as soon as it is rendered into modern spelling. Here, for instance, is a delicious example, exceeding in picturesque variety even the writing of Johnstone of that ilk. It is a letter from Habbie Armstrong and two others of his name, touching some horses of theirs which Johnstone had detained. He had refused redress, and now they claimed a reference to arbitration, in terms which offer a pleasing combination of formal respect and intimidation:—

MOST HONARABELL SCHIR, — We haf reassawet your wrytten, the quhilk we thenk weray scherpe. And sayes that ye wyll nocht send na nagis to us at thes present, bot that ye wyll do us fordor desplesour qwhene tyme sall serwe, and that ye will gar² the best of Scotland kene that we ar trast brekearis³ and wntrowe⁴ men. For ansour, ye may halld thay nagis⁵ amang mekell mayr of owris at your plessour. And as to the knowlege of our trowcht, we rak nowcht how mony honest men kene our demenour towardes yow and yowres freyndis. It is well kennet to all the hell contre⁶ that we ware haldyng na trast brekeris to na man, and gyf we haf bene gownn at your maistership, we ar the mayr to blame. And gyf that kan

be tryet, thane ye mycht have wasset us to the regwll,⁷ and nocht without caws dessarwet⁸ haf wset us as ye haf downe. Nochtwithstanding, we ar content with hony thing ye wyll do to us. Your maistership sall haf mayr nor mossour⁹ of us as resone is ye haf. For gyf ye ples to pont ane tryst and do mossour and tak mossour, we wyll reffer our cawsses in to the handis of viij Jhonstonis to mak mendes batht to your honor and plesour gyf we haf offendit, gyf we may haf the lyk of your maistership and your freyndis, the quhilkis viij Jhonstons ye sall resaf in bell,¹⁰ that is to say Jhone Jhonston in Mellynshaw, Robyne Jhonstone in Newton, the lard of Newby, the lard of Ellscheles, Wyll of Bromell, Jame of Bromell, Andrew Lokarby, Wyll of Myrched, Mithos Wyll, Syme of Carterton. S hir, ther ar freyndis and sarwandis¹¹ to your maistership, and we wyll reffer our cawsses in ther men handis, and quhat thay ordane us to do to your maistership, or hony freynd ye heff, accordyng to mossor, that we wyll do to, qwhy, that we may haf the lyk of your maistership and your freyndis. Ser- tofyng your maistership gyf that ye refws to do thes we kan do na les nor men our cawsses to honest men how we ar handellet be yow, and your maistership and your freyndis. Thes awayttand vpon your ansour we byd yow fayrwell. Of Morton thes thred of May. Yowris gyf ye byd of us,

ABBEY ARMESTRANG,
CRYSTIE ARMESTRANG,
WYLLM ARMESTRANG.

To the rycht honorable the
Lard Jhonston.

Johnstone regained his liberty in 1550, to find the wardenship once more in the custody of the Maxwells. It will be admitted that this was an exasperating bit of bad luck, and little calculated to promote friendly relations between the rival houses.

In 1566 Warden Maxwell caused

¹ Weeks.

² Cause.

³ Trust-breakers.

⁴ Untrue.

⁵ Those nags.

⁶ The whole country.

⁷ Used as by rule.

⁸ Cause deserved.

⁹ Measure.

¹⁰ Bail.

¹¹ Servants.

a thief of the Johnstone clan to be burnt to death at the cross of Dumfries. But it would be wearisome to follow all the steps in a feud that had now become hereditary. The system was to blame more than the individuals. What could be expected of a policy which instructed the Warden and his subordinates to exact security from turbulent persons, failing which he was to "burne thame [i.e., their houses and lands] and put thame and hald them furth of the cuntre." The original evil was not much worse than the remedy, and the government of those districts of Scotland most remote from the capital was not greatly different in method and result from Turkish rule in Armenia at the present day.

Sir John Johnstone of that ilk (1567-1587) proved a good chieftain to his clan, and seems to have honestly exerted himself to improve the state of matters in the south-west. Local quarrels were lulled before the greater issues entailed by the escape of Queen Mary from Lochleven, and both Johnstones and Maxwells, who had taken arms for the queen, were quelled by the appearance, after the battle of Langside, of the Regent Murray in Dumfriesshire at the head of a strong force.

But in 1574, Lord Maxwell, the Warden, having had occasion to punish some evil-doers of the Johnstone clan, the feud broke out again. The Scottish Government was so enfeebled at this time by intestine discord that it could only maintain its authority among the unruly barons by pitting them against each other. Accordingly many changes took place in the wardenship of the West Marches. Maxwell was dismissed in 1577, reinstated, again dismissed and imprisoned in 1579. He was soon liberated, but found Johnstone installed in the wardenship. But

with the disgrace of the ex-Regent Morton, Johnstone lost a powerful friend. In 1581 he was accused of laxity in discharge of his office, and Lord Maxwell was once more appointed in his place, only to be displaced once more in favour of Johnstone after the Raid of Ruthven in 1582.

Arran came into power in 1583, and the star of Johnstone continued in the ascendant. Maxwell was powerless at Court in presence of the new favourite, but he had all the more leisure to devote to local matters, chief among which was the destruction of his rival's property and slaughter of his tenants. In 1585 he was proclaimed a rebel, and summoned to surrender his lands and castles into the king's hands. His reply to this was a midnight attack on Lochwood, the chief house of the Johnstone, which he plundered and burnt to the ground, in order, as he said, "to give the Lady Johnstone light to set her hood." Johnstone, as Warden, received a special commission of fire and sword against the Maxwells, and the Convention of Estates voted £20,000 for an expedition against them.

It was a terrible time of burning and slaughtering in Annandale and Nithsdale, such as one can hardly realise in travelling to-day through these peaceful scenes. The powers arrayed against Lord Maxwell seemed enough to crush even that powerful chief. But not so. Sir John Johnstone, the Warden, was taken prisoner in a skirmish near Tinwald, and the return of the banished lords, Gowrie, Angus, and Mar, so altered affairs at headquarters that he did not regain his liberty till an Act of oblivion had been passed in his captor's favour. Calderwood, Sir Walter Scott, and other writers have alleged that Johnstone died of chagrin shortly after his release,

but in fact he lived two years longer, engaged in fierce hostility with Maxwell, to whom the wardenship had once more been restored in 1586.

About this time the bitterness of clan warfare began to be intensified by a new element—the rivalry of the Reformed religion with that of Rome. Lord Maxwell (Earl of Morton as he now was) was a staunch Catholic, and became engaged in intrigues with the Spanish Court for the furtherance of the invasion of Britain. Sir James Johnstone, who had succeeded in 1587 as head of his clan, married the daughter of John Maxwell, Lord Herries, then Warden of the West Marches. It was hoped that this alliance would put an end to the blood-feud, but it turned out to be but the prelude to fresh hostilities.

In 1593 Lord Maxwell having been again appointed Warden, one of the first duties he had to perform was to execute justice on the Johnstones of Wamphray for a raid on the Crichtons of Sanquhar. The "lads o' Wamphray," ever an unruly set, this time exceeded all reasonable limits of atrocity. Their own leader, William Johnstone, fell into the hands of the Crichtons, and was promptly hanged, but the Johnstones in revenge slew fifteen of the Crichton tenantry. The bereaved widows and sisters were sent as a deputation to the king and Council, and marched in procession through the streets of Edinburgh, with the bloody shirts of the slain displayed before them. Great popular indignation was aroused, and it was felt that vigorous measures were necessary to satisfy public opinion.

Sir James Johnstone had been imprisoned in Edinburgh for alleged complicity with Francis Stewart, Earl of Bothwell, and, having broken his ward, was

denounced as a rebel, and a commission of the usual ferocious description given to Maxwell to proceed against him with every kind of destructive force. What followed has been often told. Sir William Fraser has already described the battle of Dryfe Sands in his capacity of historian of the Maxwells, and it says much for his impartiality that, writing now from a Johnstone standpoint, he has nothing to add to his former account of it. Of the preliminary skirmish which tempted the Warden to engage the enemy before his troops had re-formed after crossing the Annan, the alleged treachery of the lairds of Drumlanrig, Oloseburn, and Lag, the rout of the Warden's troops, and his death on the field of battle, various accounts are given by the chroniclers of this, the last great feudal battle on the Borders, which took place on December 7, 1593. Of the main facts there can be no doubt, and these are once more well set forth in Sir William's narrative.

Sir James Johnstone managed to make his peace with the king, and obtained a respite for himself and his clan for the slaughter of the Warden and the events which led up to it, which seems an extraordinary example of royal clemency. But still more remarkable was what followed in 1594, when Johnstone once more was intrusted with the wardenship. If, as is probable, this was a desperate attempt by the Government to pacify the Border clans, it proved singularly ineffective, for the Maxwell faction were not unnaturally embittered; killing and burning went forward according to use and wont, and in 1597 Lord Stewart of Ochiltree received the wardenship, while Johnstone was impeached for "prosequuting a maist wyld and bludie course."

Proclaimed a rebel, he continued at war with his neighbours till, in 1600, he was once more constituted Warden, and held the office till its final abolition in 1603.

It is not only bewildering but tiresome to follow all the ins and outs of the changes briefly enumerated above; but they lay at the root of the anarchy of the period, and prepared the way for the closing tragedy. This took place in 1608. Lord Maxwell, son of the Warden who had fallen at Dryfe Sands, was in dire disgrace with the Government, having escaped from prison, and being hotly pursued by the king's most stringent orders. Sir James Johnstone, now honestly desirous of reconciliation with his hereditary foe, thought this a good opportunity to promote it, and enlisted the good offices of his brother-in-law, Sir Robert Maxwell of Spotts. A meeting between the two chiefs took place at the house of Beal on April 6, each being attended by a single kinsman, with Sir Robert, related to both parties, as mediator. All were solemnly sworn to keep the peace. While the two principals were riding one on either hand of Sir Robert, Charles Maxwell fell out with William Johnstone, the other second, and fired a pistol at him. Lord Maxwell, in spite of Sir Robert's remonstrances "Fy! my lord, mak not your self a traitour and me baith"

forced his way to Sir James Johnstone, who had turned to the assistance of William, and shot him in the back. Sir James fell to the ground, exclaimed, "Lord, have mercy on me! Christ, have mercy on me! I am decyved," and presently expired. For this foul murder under trust Maxwell was, after some years' exile, ultimately tried and executed.

According to the rule whiche of Scotland justice there would have

been no disgrace in the mere slaughter of Sir James by the son of him whom Sir James himself, being then a rebel, had slain in battle. We have seen that Sir James was pardoned for a similar crime. But the heinousness of this fresh murder was that it was done under trust, and Maxwell's sentence and execution were universally admitted to be just. An ugly feature in a dismal business is the unwomanly anxiety displayed by the mother and widow of the murdered Johnstone for the execution of Lord Maxwell. Apparently the sentence would have been commuted into one of exile had they not insisted on blood for blood. The Council reported to the king that—

"According to youre Maiesties direction, we wryte for the laird of Johnnstoun, his moder and goode-dame to vnderstand of thame gif thay wald persist in the persute of that petitoun exhibite vnto your Maiestie in their names, whairby thai craved iustice to be execute vpounn the forfeyted Lord Maxwell for the slaughter of the laite laird of Johnnstoun. Thay come all to this burgh and the laird of Johnnstoun with his moder and tutor presentit tham selfis before ws, and declairit that thay wald insist in that persute and prosecutionn of that mater according to the tennour of thair petitoun. The auld Lady Johnnstoun, through seiknes and inhabilitie of hir persone being vnable to compeir before ws, we directit and send the Bishop of Caithnes, the Lord Kildrymmie, and lord preuey seale to hir to vnderstand hir will and pleasure in this mater; vnto quhome scho declairit that scho come heir purposelie for that mater, and that scho wald insist according to the tennour of the petitoun; sua that now thair restis no farther bot youre Maiesteis will and pleasure to be declairit quhat forder youre Maiestie will haif to be done; wherein althocht the conclusioun of youre Maiesteis letter heiris that we sould proceed to the administratioun of iustice, yitt in respect of a worde casin in the pre-

face of the lettre, beiring that your Maiestie had not as yitt gevin a direct ansuer to thair petition, we haif presomed first to acquent your Maiestie afor we proceed ony forder."

These ladies must be judged for their relentless attitude, not by the light of later days, but according to the standard of the time, which prescribed satisfaction to be done for bloodshed, on pain of a slur on the family honour.

Thus was this great feud quenched in blood, and thenceforward there were few interruptions to the ordinary relations of country neighbours in the intercourse of Maxwells and Johnstones. Amity was facilitated by the abolition of that venerable bone of contention, the wardenship, and also by the special exemption prudently granted to the Johnstones from the jurisdiction of the Maxwells as hereditary stewards of Annandale.

There was, indeed, some recrudescence of the old hatred arising out of the Covenanting troubles. James, first Lord Johnstone, at first espoused the cause of the Covenant, while Maxwell, first Earl of Nithsdale, was a king's man. Johnstone raised a regiment and ineffectively besieged Carlawerock Castle, the seat of his ancient rival, in 1640. But in the following year he seems to have changed sides, and was co-operating with Montrose at Cumbernauld. He was created Earl of Hartfell in 1643, taken prisoner at Philiphaugh, tried and sentenced to death, but was reprieved on the day fixed for his execution on the intercession of the Marquis of Argyll. The second earl, having suffered grievously by fines and other incidents of Cromwell's administration of Scotland, was requited at the Restoration, not in hard cash, for Charles II. had ever but limited command over that commodity, but by the earldom of

Annandale. When the Cameronians rose in arms in 1666, the earl raised a troop of horse for the service of the king, of which he himself was appointed captain, and it is significant of the altered state of matters that the Master of Nithsdale, afterwards fourth earl, was his lieutenant.

Great man as was now the chief of the Johnstones, he found it hard to find money to pay his troop. He writes to his chamberlain desiring "some supply for the troupe, being altogether destitute of monnay. . . . The Lord knowis what will become of us, for if this warre continow it is impossible we can subsist and keipe credit." Other wants he had, but there can be little doubt that the following touching appeal to his countess soon brought about their satisfaction:—

"I wonder yow sentt me not a wholl shirtte. Ther is not a wholle bitte in this I have heire. Pray yow, my deire, make tuo new ones, and haistte them to me. . . . And send tuo or threi quaire of common paper, withe a stike of wax."

The fortunes of the Johnstones culminated in the long lifetime of the second Earl of Annandale. His outset in public affairs was not very dignified, for he was by turns Orangeman and Jacobite, and nothing long. He was President of the Scottish Council and Parliament in 1695, and conducted the proceedings of the Commission appointed in that year to inquire into the circumstances of the massacre of Glencoe. In 1701 he was appointed Lord High Commissioner to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, and applied himself to his duties, it is to be hoped, according to the lines laid down by Mr William Vetch, minister of Dumfries:—

"Take abundance of patienc along with yow, and when yow speak suggar your words well, on likelie way both

to accomplish your designe and gain applause. Watch against passion and precipitancy in yourself, thow yow see them in heate."

One is reminded of an oft-told tale of later date about the Lord High Commissionership. When Mr Disraeli was forming his Administration in 1874 a certain noble earl, noted, in addition to many estimable qualities, for his fecundity of forcible expletive, expressed a strong desire to become Master of the Buckhounds. "Well," said Disraeli, "I had myself thought of that post for your lordship; but the truth is that her Majesty is very particular about the language used in the hunting-field, so I have determined to submit your name to her approval as Lord High Commissioner to the General Assembly!" and to that post he was appointed accordingly.

Annandale was raised to the dignity of Marquis before Queen Anne's accession, and in 1704 became Secretary of State. He opposed the legislative Union of Scotland with England, but as soon as it was carried he declared that "no man living will make itt more his business to make thiss present union and settlement happe to this nation then I shall doe." When George I. ascended the throne, the Marquis of Annandale received the appointment of Lord Privy Seal. In the following year, 1715, the affairs of his own county claimed his attention, for the Jacobites were marching on Dumfries. He narrowly escaped capture by a troop of horse under Lords Nithsdale and Kenmure. This was the last time that the heads of the Houses of Maxwell and Johnstone were to meet in warlike array, for Nithsdale was tried and condemned to forfeiture and death for his part in the insurrection. Thus the last main in

this long game of hazard between these great clans was won by the Johnstone.

But although the lands so long associated with these two families still remain in large part in their possession, the proud titles of their owners, to gain which successive barons fought so hard and schemed so patiently, exist no more. The earldom of Nithsdale has never been released from the attainder of 1716; the marquissate of Annandale has failed through the extinction of the male line. The latter was the subject of protracted litigation between divers claimants, of which Sir William furnishes a precise account, which will prove invaluable should the questions involved ever be raised again.

The chronicler of the Johnstones has done his part with the grace of a practised hand. He is neither too lavish in panegyric nor prolix in narrative. He has given his readers insight into the troubled passage of our people through anarchy to order, and through the privations and suffering inseparable from civil and foreign warfare, often simultaneously waged, to a state of tranquillity and abundance such as they have never before enjoyed. There are, it is true, several gaps in the chronicle, so far as it relates to the family of Johnstone; but these are owing, not to the author's failure in diligence, but to the violence of the great blood-feud which occupies so large a portion of the volumes. For when Lord Maxwell burned the tower of Lochwood in 1585, not only were the furniture and all Dame Margaret's jewels destroyed, but the contents of the charter-chest perished also. The *lacune* in Sir William's narrative are themselves evidence of continuity in his chronicle.

HERBERT MAXWELL.

WHERE LOVE DOTH DWELL.

For thirty years I dwelt within the sound
Of earth's most mighty city—that shall yet,
Some dim and distant day, no more be found,
Save by grey ruins where its stones were set!
And there I wrought my toil, and deemed it pleasure;
And there the changeless gold, desired so much,
Grew ever, as I toiled, to fuller measure,
Till I was envied for my "Midas touch"!

But never was I miser!—from my store
I gave with secret largesse sums untold.
But still success succeeded more and more;
And still my wants were few, my fancy cold.
At last there dawned a day when I was smitten
With sudden sense of sadness and of ruth;
I paused awhile, and pondered. *It was written*
That I should wake to grasp my fleeting youth!

Toil seemed no more a pleasure; through my blood
Pulses of ardent summer made a thrill;
Emotions caught me on their whirling flood,
For youth within my veins was burning still.
I turned my feet aside from those dim places,
Those grey unlovely buildings, and the throng
Of ever-hasting forms and eager faces,
And sought the brilliant sphere ignored so long!

And there I gazed on Beauty that was crowned
With priceless jewels flashing in the light;
There gay and silvery laughter floated round,
And lips were rosy-red, and eyes were bright.
There Music tranced me with her witching voices,
And Sculpture charmed me with her snowy grace;
There shone the radiant realm where Art rejoices,
And Wealth must seek it with adoring face.

Then came a wish to wander—to behold
At least one wondrous world that God had made,
And man had altered while the centuries rolled!
So I went roaming where my fancy bade.
I looked on endless frozen steppes, on dreary
And sunburnt deserts, on the polar snows,
And on the tropic palms—nor was I weary!
The world is wonderful where'er one goes.

At last there dawned a day when I was smitten
With sudden sense of dread—for all my bliss
Hung on a woman's smile!—but *it was written*
That Love, who sought me late, should grant me this!

I named her, very soon, my "Rose of Sharon,"
And knew that I should love her till I crossed,
Prone in the shrouded barge of grim old Charon,
The gloomy ferry where our love is lost.

She had no dazzling beauty, but I saw
Her face was fresh and dainty, and her hair
Was dark and very soft: 'tis hard to draw
A woman's subtle charm,—but she was fair;
Enough, at least, for me!—enough to fetter
My not too careless fancy once for aye!
And then her heart was kind; and what is better
Than kindness in a woman—can you say?

One day when we were sitting, looking where
The after-glow diffused its peerless rose,
Its exquisite effulgence, through the air
With the bright magic only Nature knows,
She turned on me her eyes—her eyes that often
Were dreamy as a poet's, yet were fond,
Whose deepest darkest grey so well could soften,
E'en after straining to the Veiled Beyond!

And then she laid in mine her little hands,
And soft indeed her eyes were, as she said,
"Love! thou hast wandered over many lands,
O'er many a glitt'ring sea thy barque hath sped;
Wilt thou then settle now, in rosy tether?
Or must we hold and share a roving rein,
And still, like gay Bohemians, linked together,
Go wand'ring onwards where our minds are fain?"

I turned, and closer clasped her little hands;
With voiceless inner sob, I smiled and said,
"Love! I have wandered over many lands,
O'er many a glitt'ring sea my barque hath sped;
But so that thou and I be still together,
I care not if we share a roving rein,
Or if we settle in a rosy tether,
Or if we wander where our minds are fain!"

"Ah God!" I cried, "*I care not!—it is well,
So that I ever be where Love doth dwell!*"

ALICE MACKAY.

CHÂTEAU-HUNTING IN FRANCE.

WE had been very lucky in the houses we had taken in three successive summers, but this time we wanted something more serious than a residence for the sunny months.

Our first *villégiature* in France we had spent by the Lake of Annecy, and we thought we should never again find anything so beautiful as the site of our chalet, standing on the water-side on a slope of the Alps. It was a summer of golden memories, some of which have been recorded in 'Maga,' for our nearest neighbour was M. Taine, whose surviving family contains some of our dearest friends. Last year we spent a few quiet days at Boringe, where everything in the lovely old place reminds one of the master who rests within sight of his pleasant home.

The next year found us in the opposite corner of France, at the mouth of the Gironde, in the Charente Inférieure, where the Princesse de Z., the mother of one of my Parisian friends, lent us an ideal place for that hot summer of the elections (the French elections, I mean); for we were surrounded on three sides by the sea, and while the vintage in the Médoc across the estuary was ripe a month before its time, we always had a cool breeze, which came up from the Atlantic beyond the Cordouan lighthouse celebrated by Michelet.

It was the following year that we discovered the most delightful of all our summer retreats. The mountains attracted us back to Savoy, but this time to a region more smiling than that of our little Lake of Annecy. The Lake of Geneva is often associated with noisy steamers and electric tram-

ways, and all the vulgarities which have spoilt its beauty up by Vevey and Chillon. But Léman is big, and there are corners on the French side undiscovered by British and Yankee tourists. There is one bay quite neglected by "means of communication." To get to the railway a delicious mountain drive is necessary, and only two slow steamboats a-day disturb its tranquillity. There we found the most picturesque house possible to imagine, standing in its own little park, which sloped down to the lake. It belonged to the descendant of a brave soldier, who was put to death at the Second Restoration, about the same time as Marshal Ney (who was also connected with our landlord), and the villa was full of souvenirs of the Empire. There was a fine old château, full of kind people, less than a mile from us, and the walk to it among the woods at the edge of the lake was a dream of beauty.

If the Chablais had only been blessed with a climate tolerable in winter, I think we should have become the owners of that little corner of the earth, with its great trees and its Napoleonic relics.

It was, however, a house which we could inhabit both summer and winter that we wanted now to hear of. The lease was up of our Paris home: to take a fresh one would probably mean spending the rest of our days in that pleasant city, most difficult to quit, and we wished to return to our native land as soon as my husband's work was finished. Our best plan seemed, therefore, to find a comfortable château, not too isolated, where a year's uninterrupted writing could be accomplished under circumstances wholesome and

agreeable for the little members of our family. We had no illusions about French châteaux. We had stayed in a good many, not only in the neighbourhood of Paris, where the greatest *luxes* prevails, and in well-known regions like Burgundy and Brittany, where many of the owners of the big houses are Parisians, but also in remote departments like the Aveyron, the Aude, and the Landes, where country gentlemen, however high-sounding their names and titles, often live all the year round, excepting for a month or two in the winter, when they go for the season to Toulouse, Bordeaux, or some other provincial capital.

We therefore had a good general idea of what inhabited country-houses were like, and did not begin our search with any preconceived English ideas, except, perhaps, that derived from the fact that in England it is the practice to let to strangers, for moderate rents, houses appointed as luxuriously as when they are occupied by their owners.

We commenced our inquiries among our château-owning friends. They, as a rule, declared that nothing could be easier than to find what we wanted; but though they knew of many châteaux for sale in their neighbourhoods, they had heard of none to let, and they advised us to consult an agency. We had, however, had experience of agencies. The previous year an agent sent us some photographs of one of the most imposing donjons that was ever reared. The description was even more attractive than the view, as majestic towers are not always adapted for the needs of modern life, and it related that besides the *salle des gardes* and other stately apartments of a romantic age, there was a wing added under the First Empire.

The name of this castle was as noble as that of its owner. The polite agent said that M. le Comte was not able to leave either plate or linen. We regretted the latter, as the linen-chests of châteaux often contain treasures unknown to English households; but as for the *argenterie*, it seemed natural that the worthy gentleman should not like to intrust to strangers heirlooms perhaps rescued from the Revolution. The country, we knew, was lovely, not far from Avallon and Semur, and as we knew the owners of Bourbilly, we thought the neighbourhood might be pleasant for a short sojourn, so one day off we set by trains that went fast as long as we stuck to the main line of the P.L.M., and crawled when we branched away from it. At last, when the shadows were growing long, we espied, on a wooded bank above a river, our donjon, and we descended at the little station with enthusiasm, for the scenery was perfectly beautiful. A sad-looking notary emerged from another part of the train. He had arranged to meet us, and seemed to discourage our admiration as we pointed to the battlements rising above the trees while we toiled up the bank. He asked us if we had thoughts of buying the property, if we were taking it for the *chasse*, or had we the intention to cultivate. The declivities of the ground hid the tower from our sight till we came to a high wall pierced by a gate green with moss. The notary made muscular efforts to turn in a rusty lock a great key he produced; the gate creaked, opened, and revealed a courtyard thickly planted with the most gigantic nettles I have ever seen. The notary remarked that money would have to be laid out to make straight the approach to the castle.

We entered it; but there is no need to describe the interior of this squalid ruin. It is sufficient to say that it was in worse condition than if it had never been occupied since the Revolution, for beds, which had been slept in during the *chasse* of the year before, had never been made; and when the notary unearthed a bottle of wine, it was difficult to taste its sourness, as the owner had not only carried off his silver flagons, but the cheap glass he had left in their place was disabled.

We were therefore sceptical about agencies, and not more fruitful was the alternative suggestion to advertise in the 'Figaro,' when we were assured we should be embarrassed with the choice of residences offered to us. We did advertise: we gave no limit of rent: we made no restriction as to locality, excepting that a picturesque site was asked for not too far from a country town,—and we received five replies. Three of them were from agencies, making the usual offers; one was from the owner of a villa at Biarritz; and one from the owner of a château, who has advertised it vainly for several years, and all the disadvantages of which were familiar to us.

We were beginning to think that it is not the practice for French people to let their country-houses, unless they are uninhabitable, when one night, in the salon of Madame de X., we met the Bishop of St Médard. Monseigneur A. has a quality—very rare nowadays in a French prelate—he is *très mondain*, and no one is in greater request to pronounce the nuptial benediction in all the fashionable churches of Paris, from St Thomas d'Aquin to St Pierre de Chaillot. He even accepts invitations to dinner and

to evening parties, on condition that a hint is given about the *décolletage* of our frocks; and when, as his Grandeur was sipping his coffee, I told him of our needs, he replied at once, "*J'ai votre affaire, madame*. You shall come and live in my diocese, and you will never regret it." Three mornings later, before we were up, a ring at the bell disturbed the valets de chambre preparing to *frotter* the parquet, and the card was brought to me of the "Vicomtesse Aimery de Bois de Vincennes." A lean lady of severe aspect, *tout de noir vêtue*, announced that she came on the part of Monseigneur, and that she had exactly the château which we required. With great method she rapped out its charms, and we afterwards heard it was quite a nice place. There was one little difficulty: it was seventeen kilometres from the nearest town, and ten from the railway. The noble dame did not regard this remoteness as a disqualification. She bade us take a train that very night for a station at which we should arrive at four in the morning. We could revive ourselves with coffee while a rural vehicle was being prepared, and after seeing the château, we could, by spending another eight hours in the train, get back to Paris to sign the lease before dinner.

The ways of this diocese seemed too fatiguing, and then we remembered a charming neighbourhood where we had paid some visits last year. In one of the biggest and pleasantest châteaux in central France, on the borders of the Charolais, we had already been talking of our project of taking a place, and our host had mentioned a beautiful property, twenty-five kilometres away in the Morvan, which stood empty from one year's

end to the other. It belonged to the Duchesse de B., and her husband being the head of one of those families, not uncommon in the French *noblesse*, which for generations have married heiresses, had already more houses than he could live in, but had the French prejudice about letting. The Duke had just died, and we heard that Madame de B. would be quite glad to have us for tenants, so one sunny morning at the end of April we set out for Nevers, choosing that route with the idea of inquiring about other places in the direction of that pleasant little city on the Loire. There were one or two to let, but none within a dozen English miles of shops and trains, so we started off to the Morvan. It was warm spring weather in the Nivernais, but as we mounted the hills we got back into winter, and the trees and hedgerows were black and leafless long before we reached the château of Laroche-quipleure, perched on a high rampart of rocks, and conspicuous for miles around.

It was a fine old house, built two hundred years ago by Marshal de Villars on the site of a feudal fortress, and probably had we visited it a fortnight later when the woods were green, we should have become the co-tenants with the ghosts of the soldiers and ladies of the ancient regime whose portraits hung in the salon, for the site was superb; but the backwardness of vegetation showed plainly that winter lasts for seven long months in the mountains of the Morvan. Five-and-twenty kilometres, the distance from the château of our friends in Saône-et-Loire, is nothing with a pair of fast horses on a long summer's day, but not to be enterprised lightly in the months that they used to

call *Nivôse* and *Pluviôse* in these parts. For this corner of France is full of revolutionary tradition; we passed Décize that morning, the birthplace of St Just, and the deputy whom this old *bourg* helps to send to the Palais Bourbon is an ex-communard and a native of the region. This accounted, perhaps, for the horrid anti-clerical prints with which the walls of the village inn were covered. The *régisseur* invited us to breakfast in the long-disused *salle-à-manger*; but we thought it would save him trouble and secure us a better meal if we descended to the *auberge*, and its political decorations accounted for the reluctance of the respectable representative of Madame la Duchesse to let the possible occupants of the château frequent so undesirable a haunt.

It was a pleasant day that we spent in this mountainous corner of the Nièvre, leaving it with regret, and feeling that it would be a perfect residence for the summer months. The *linge de maison* was no myth in this château: it was worth the day's journey to see the tons of finest, whitest linen; the endless dozens of every conceivable article, all exquisitely marked with coronet and cipher, and stored away in a country-house that was not inhabited once in ten years.

We went down from the Morvan hills to Autun. It was my first visit there, but my husband had pleasant associations with the bright little city. Before my time he had spent charming hours in the old palace of the Dukes of Burgundy with the bishop, the well-known Academician, whose Cardinal's hat was so long delayed by the Republic, and with his brother the Abbé Charles Perrand, now dead, like his friends Henri Perreyve and Lacordaire. Monseigneur was in Paris at the

centenary of the École Normale, so we had to content ourselves this time with an exterior view of the *évêché*. That would have been the ideal place for us, a spacious country-house surrounded by a great garden, under the shadow of a cathedral, and at the gates of a pretty town, where all the movement of French life can be studied. But we are always coveting official residences, which under no circumstances could ever be diverted from their official uses—the préfecture at Annecy, for example, with one of the most glorious views in the world from its windows.

The chancellor of the diocese had politely put us into communication with the notary of the Chapter, and we heard of every place to be let in the region. There was one which from a distance looked as if it would suit us—a long low house standing in a well-timbered park sheltered by the mountains, with a railway-station hard by, Autun within an hour's drive, and the châteaux of several friends almost as near. Our experience there was repeated many a time before we had done our château-hunting. Close at hand the park proved to be unkempt meadows, extending to the windows, without any pretence of garden or flower-beds: the house was all façade, the rooms being of the dimensions of those in a cottage. When we arrived in the untidy stable-yard the "guardian" of the property, to whom the "authorisation to visit" was addressed, said he could not read, and that his wife was in the same case; but as the château was still occupied, he would take the missive to his master. This turned out to be a young officer who had been married apparently about six months, and who, with his wife, was entertaining

the Curé at breakfast. They were all three rather large people, and they completely filled the *grand salon* into which we were introduced; and when we drove away, they even more tightly crowded the dining-room, where I am sure they would have liked to invite us to join them, if there had only been space.

If we could have moved down from the mountains the Louis XIV. château and put it in the place of the imposture in the valley, we should have been quite content. Autun is such a nice place, and the people in the region are so pleasant, that we thought we would make one more attempt before quitting the country. There is a celebrated château on a high hill above the little city, which formerly belonged to a family famed in history. It has descended in the line female, and is rarely inhabited. The estate and the park are well looked after, but the house is said to be going to ruin for want of occupation. This is exactly the sort of place which in England an owner is delighted to let to a careful tenant who will keep it in airing and repair; and one morning before eight o'clock we received the visit of the *notaire* of the property at the comfortable old Hôtel de la Poste. How well they look after one sometimes at French provincial inns which are off the tourist track, and, excepting for their early habits, what agreeable and civilised men the family lawyers are in France! No doubt there are highly civilised lawyers in England too, but English people somehow seem to associate them always with battling dishonesty and other time-wasting evils, so that the solicitor inspires the same ungrateful feeling as the dentist, who also has to relieve us of dull impudent trouble which

has nothing to do with our real lives : but this does not seem to be the position the French notary has in the hearts of his clients.

The Princesse de O's lawyer confirmed what we had heard, that the inheritors of Bois Dormant rarely came near the place, and, he declared, it would be of great advantage to the house to be inhabited ; but, he added, there was one unsurmountable difficulty—the *régisseur*. The good notary avowed that he himself had never been allowed to see the inside of the château ; he promised to send a request to let us visit it, but warned us that the *régisseur* had the reputation of being the surliest man in Burgundy. It turned out as he said. We had a delightful drive, winding up a wooded hill until below us lay stretched like a map all the country described by poor Mr Hamerton (whom we knew so well) in 'Round my House,' during the bombardment of Autun by the Prussians ; but the *régisseur* was waiting for us, only to say that no one should ever set foot in the house. In this he showed his wisdom, as the agreeableness of being uncontrolled master of one of the greatest estates in France would no doubt be diminished by eviction from his fine quarters in the château. As we enjoyed the view from the terrace across the hospitable Charolais, recognising many a familiar point in the landscape, which on a clear day is only bounded by Mont Blanc, we consoled ourselves by the reflection that Bois Dormant was slightly isolated for a winter residence. The park—in reality a great forest—is so vast that there is not a village, a farm, or scarcely a cottage, within five kilometres of the château.

We returned to Paris from our pleasant excursion with a feeling

that all the year round places are difficult to find in France, when a few days later the noble owner of Azay le Rideau called to see me. He once had a highly distinguished tenant ; but it was a distinction he did not wish to experience again, for Prince Frederick Charles and his companions in arms did not leave agreeable souvenirs in that marvel of the Renaissance which they occupied during the invasion in 1870.

The amiable *châtelain* of Azay warmly recommended us to install ourselves in Touraine, extolling the beauty of the country, and the pleasant life in that land of châteaux ; and he told us how to get hold of the notaries in that region who were most likely to know of places to let.

The result of his directions was that the following week found us making a series of drives through the Balzac country. The first was to see a château of which we had heard in Paris. Its situation undoubtedly was beautiful, on a hill overlooking the parallel streams of the Cher and the Loire, with the Cathedral of Tours in the background of the landscape ; but the interior arrangements gave the idea of a house stuffy in summer and chilly in winter. We were rather surprised, as it was once rented by some friends of ours who have one of the finest hotels in the quarter of the Champs Elysées, with air and space and light, which ought to be in greater abundance in the country than in the capital. How was it that people who insisted on every sumptuous luxury in Paris, should in Touraine put up with a rather mean habitation with which they had no association ? The mystery was solved when we afterwards heard that their eldest son had been sent to Tours to do his mili-

tary service, for there is nothing that the most *mondaine* of Parisian mothers will not endure to be near their offspring.

The same day we drove to a place we were sorely tempted to take. Divided by a dense wood from a picturesque village, which had seen no change since "*Le Lys dans la Vallée*" lived hard by, stood a lodge-gate of architecture giving promise of advanced civilisation within. We were not disappointed. A handsome modern house, not unworthy of the neighbourhood of the historical châteaux of the Loire, was quite eclipsed by the magnificence of the stables,—stables such as I have rarely seen in France, and to have lived up to them would have certainly ruined us had we taken Château Renard. Its site was superb, with a view across the valley of the two rivers over against Luynes. It had been built by a rich Tourangean, and his widow had retired to a convent, leaving a beautiful chapel as a memorial of her share in planning the château. For a summer residence it was delightfully arranged, and the lilacs in flower, the blue sky, and the singing of the birds made one feel that it would be good to rest here—till the turn of the leaf. But what of the winter, with Tours half a day's journey away, and the green woodland that lay between the park and the village a gloomy black forest? The interior, too, seemed better adapted for the playtime of the year than for long winter evenings, as the necessity for doors to salons seemed not to have occurred to the architect, and airy portières are a chilly protection against the howling *bise*.

Another day we explored the country round about Chinon, with its memories of Joan of Arc. We

had the engraving of a château within a drive of the birthplace of Rabelais, and as we approached it on a perfect May afternoon, with the nightingales singing their hearts out, it seemed as if we had at last found an ideal habitation, so much better than the picture was the graceful mass of turrets, pinnacles, and tracery that met our view as we crossed the rich meadows past the *pigeonnier* below the house. We had quitted the carriage to take a short cut, and after we had done admiring the fifteenth-century architecture, we noticed that there was no entrance visible. Before we had time to think of any learned reason why a house of this period should be built without a front door, we had wandered round the entire building without perceiving any means of ingress except a dingy-looking portal, evidently the *entrée de service*. A caroworn woman came forth from it and offered to show us the château. After passing by a diminutive kitchen, we entered a rude apartment, the furniture of which reminded me of the inventory of the goods of the Yonghey Bonghey Bô as sung by the favourite English poet of my sons, the late Mr Edward Lear. We thought it was what in an English house would be the servants' hall, and its bareness showed the aversion French servants all have to take their meals outside the kitchen. "*La salle-à-manger des domestiques ?*" my companion therefore blandly inquired. "*La salle-à-manger principale : la seule salle-à-manger,*" was the severe answer. It must in justice be said that the whole mansion was furnished in strict harmony with the dining-room; but the most comfortable inventions of ancient and modern art could never have made it

habitable, as all its countless rooms were of the dimensions of cells or cupboards. The explanation, perhaps, was that it was built for the officers of the Court in the days when Agnès Sorel had a château on the road to Chinon, when Charles VII. was in residence in the Plantagenet stronghold; and was therefore in those days simply a barrack, not used for entertaining, but erected at that happy epoch when everything that rose from the ground was beautiful in form. All the same, it was odd that its present owners should have taken so much pains to restore the deceptive façade.

If outlay of money could not have made habitable the picturesque quarters of the retinue of "La Dame de Beauté," that was not the case with the next château we visited. The people at Azay le Rideau had told us about it, and it is one of the finest Renaissance structures in Touraine, though Murray be ignorant of it, and Augustus Hare acknowledge it not. Even the painstaking Joanne makes but brief mention of this splendid old pile on the Indre. Four massive towers, crowned with extinguisher-tops, led us to expect something rather impressive inside; but the majestic proportions of the *salle des gardes*, and the remarkable state of preservation of the ceiling, emblazoned with arms and names, were beyond all anticipation. It should be observed that this magnificent apartment, as fine as anything at Chenonceaux, and almost as vast as the great modern hall at Ferrières, met our astonished gaze in what was practically a half-inhabited farmhouse. It seems that at the Revolution it was sold as *biens nationaux*; it had never passed into the hands of wealthy people or been inhabited since as

a château, and was now the property of a village notary, whose *belle-mère* occupied some of the rooms on the ground-floor, while the fine chambers on the second storey were used as stores for the farm produce. There were one or two barely furnished bedrooms in the towers, with walls a couple of yards thick, and it was the practice of the owner to let them during the summer months, together with the *salle des gardes*, for a moderate sum to families of the *petite bourgeoisie*, who came to spend the holidays with half-a-dozen children and a *bonne-à-tout-faire*. It was singularly incongruous the idea of these good people spending the nights sleeping five in a meanly furnished bedroom, and the days in a hall in which Diane de Poitiers might have banqueted. If we had been in search of a property to buy instead of to hire, it seemed to be a rare chance of acquiring a fine place in a lovely country, which would have needed comparatively little expenditure to make it a splendid habitation. Perhaps the river, which surrounded it almost like a moat, turning a picturesque mill, made it damp in winter, though Azay le Rideau, in a similar situation, is often inhabited by the family until after the New Year.

A remarkable contrast was the next house we inspected. It was a nice place at the gates of Tours, surrounded by what the French call a *parc clos de murs*, and the English "extensive grounds," and it must have been a most agreeable residence before the era of railways. Unfortunately the engineers who brought those destroyers of calm to Tours made an iron-bound island of this little estate; and the truthful notary who sent us there warned us that if we were constituted like him, our nerves

would not survive the whistling a week. Moreover, the only approach to it from the town was through a grimy suburb, most unlike the capital of Touraine. It is indeed a city of contrasts. M. Ludovic Halévy has sometimes talked to me about his impressions there when it was the seat of Government during the war, some of which he has recorded in his delightful volume, 'L'Invasion.' He was struck with the marvellous change from the tumult of the centre of the town, where troops were hurrying through and politicians clamouring to see Gambetta, to the stillness of the streets around the Cathedral, which were as tranquil as when Balzac described them. Revolutions and wars only last for a season, but railways and their disfigurements never disappear; and to-day, by the préfecture at Tours, if one turns in one direction, in three minutes one is in the pious and discreet quarter frequented by canons, while the other leads one as quickly to the smoke and noise of a manufacturing faubourg.

We had not yet explored the north side of the Loire, so one May morning we drove towards Langeais. Above a gateway in a high park wall hung a rusty chain, and this being pulled caused a bell to give forth a sepulchral sound. A surprised gardener, after a long delay, let the carriage in, which toiled up through a tangled thicket of vegetation till it stopped before a handsome *perron*. The rooms were of fine proportion, yet the sunlight streaming in by the great windows, and the glorious prospect of river and valley, did not drive away a chilly feeling, which would have been more appropriate to a visit to a mausoleum on a November evening. Up-stairs there was a stately chamber with an old engraving on

the wall representing the birth of the Duc de Bordeaux, and on a *guéridon* stood a faded photograph, signed "Philippe Comte de Paris." In one corner was a bale of the 'Gazette de France,' and while we were wondering why for months the wrappers of that respectable Royalist organ had not been broken, and why they had been brought to a bedroom, the gaunt wife of the gardener, pointing to the dust-laden baldaquin, croaked, "Le lit où Madame la Marquise est morte." Then we recognised the prevailing odour of disinfectant, and we understood the rows of medicine bottles on the parquet, and the unopened newspapers and all the rest. We fled from that haunted château down to the Loire, rolling towards Saumur beneath a sky of blue.

In the opposite direction we were sent another day to a property hidden among greenlands. It had not an inhabited air, and the owner, who looked more like an Irish landlord than a French proprietor, told us that, being solitary, he lived in a farm, desiring to let his manor-house, a word which describes more aptly than château the spacious building of unpretentious English style—though every rural residence from a suburban villa to Chantilly is called a castle in France. We, moreover, noticed some English engravings, not of the kind collected in France—interiors of Windsor and views of York Minster—and it turned out that the mother of this lonely gentleman was the daughter of an Honourable and Reverend Prebendary of the Church of England, and first cousin to a noble lord who was a once famous Cabinet Minister. She died in giving birth to her son, and he had never spoken a word of English. What was

worthy of remark was that while he was closely connected with the British Peerage, he had not even a *particule* to his French name, and that being the owner of a big house and a nice estate, he did not call himself Marquis or Vicomte. Perhaps it was unconscious English pride that caused this rare self-restraint, as not one French *hobereau* in a hundred, even when his origin is humblest, refrains from decking himself with a title, whether he has the shadow of a right to it or not.

This place, like all the others we had seen in Touraine, seemed not a desirable winter residence, and that objection applies not only to the few which are to let, but to most of the inhabited country-houses. It is due to the fact that most of the *châtelains* who do not go to Paris have hotels for the coldest months in their provincial towns. The former owners of the property I have called Château Renard always thus migrated to Tours, at the St Martin, to their hotel near the basilica dedicated to that saint. What M. Taine said of the "Ancien Régime" is true now that only the English and the Germans are content to spend the sad months of rain in the solitude of a castle.

Time fails to recount all our other expeditions. On one, eastward from Paris, in the direction of Champagne, a château we inspected had belonged to an ambassador now dead. It was a fine house, with a beautiful library worthy of its late owner; but the place was going to ruin from disuse, and even when in good repair it was said to be glacial in winter. We had heard that the present proprietor little resembled his refined and distinguished father, but we were not prepared for the apparition that greeted us. We were

told that he lived in a farm the life of a peasant; but French peasants are generally small creatures in blue blouses, while this was a bearded and booted giant, like the traditional pictures of ranchemen or South African Boers, with an undiplomatic voice of thunder.

Another tour of inspection we took on the north coast, not with any conviction that we should settle in that region; but I was tired of travelling far from my little sons, and before the tourist season Le Treport is a charming place for babes, when the fisher-people decorate their sails for the *Fête-Dieu*. Our most amusing incident in Normandy and Picardy was at a pretty place near Abbeville, where the owner had long wished for an English tenant, and to prove it showed us a printed catechism sent him by a London estate-agent, which he had answered with the aid of a well-known authoress. It was easy enough to reply to the questions about the trains and the drains, but when he was asked, "Is the county society in the neighbourhood agreeable?" and "What are the nearest packs of hounds?" he felt some difficulty in describing the charms of the scattered and unsociable *petite noblesse de province*, and that a reference to the occasional *rallye-papier* of the officers at Amiens was scarcely adequate. The incident illustrates the difference of English and French ideas on country life.

But the summer was marching along, and we were as far from finding our château as when we commenced our hunting in earl's spring. Our friends continual' said, "Why not settle in Seine-Marne or Seine-et-Oise? The country is lovely, and swarming with nice people; and if you /

bored you can always run up to Paris, while for studying provincial life there is no difference between one neighbourhood and another, except for the *patois* of the peasants." The last observation is, unfortunately, almost true, as a village in the Brie is organized in exactly the same way as a village in Dauphiné or Guienne, so after some disdainful protests about the *banlieue de Paris*, we began to explore that radius.

Our first attempt was not promising. A "Moderate" politician of our acquaintance covets the seat of a Socialist deputy, and owns a local newspaper to further his campaign. He kindly offered to announce in it our wants, with the result that a perfectly lyrical description was forwarded to us of a château near the Forest of Montmorency. We did not fancy that side of Paris, though the neighbourhood of an illustrious lady—almost the last of the second generation of the *Mater Regum*, whose tomb I have seen at Ajaccio—would have been agreeable. But even the proximity of St Gratien did not justify the rent asked, 18,000 francs—over £700. The odd thing was that though this indicated a place of great pretension, no one knew its name, and it was not marked on the map. However, it was so near Paris that the day of M. Bourget's reception at the Academy, after M. de Vogüé had finished his peroration, there was time to fly to the Gare du Nord, visit the property, and return for dinner. On the way we decided that, however attractive the place, we would not be tempted by its luxurious comfort—and we were not. It was a dusty roadside villa in a rather pretty garden, and the whole property, including the shabby furniture, was not

worth three years' rent. We concluded that the owner was a lunatic.

A day or two later I was enjoying the marvellous view over the Place de la Concorde from the balcony of the most finely situated town-house in the world, where the Prince de Talleyrand died, and Baroness de X., who has a special kindness for her countrywomen, for she was born in England, said she had found what we wanted not far from her own famous château. The next afternoon a carriage met us at a station on the Strasbourg line, and drove us to a perfectly charming place. A farmer general of Louis XIV. had built on a smaller scale what Fouquet reared at Vaux, and when in the next reign it was given to Madame de Pompadour, it was decorated within by the most famous artists of the period. It was then that Louis XV. had a *chaussée* laid down of fifty kilometres for the favourite to drive thence with ease to Versailles, and sometimes in our drives we come to a "*carrefour Pompadour*" to recall the history of that paved road, though we did not become the successors of *La belle Marquise*. The owner, the grandson of a celebrated regicide of the Convention, showed us all the beauties of the house, and of the great park stretching down to the Marne; but he wanted to sell and not to let, and our specious plea that the season for sales had passed for the year was belied a fortnight later when some of our own friends bought the place.

It was only an hour's drive from that pleasant spot, in an even more picturesque corner of the Brie, that we finally found a resting-place. The kind *châtelaine*, who had told us of the former, asked the wittiest member of the Académie Française

to call to see me and sing the praises of a place, also within reach of her own stately domain, which we had originally heard of from an agent in the days when we mistrusted agencies, and despised the environs of Paris, and thus we became his nearest neighbours. We had lighted upon an ideal French home. The château, standing high in a finely timbered park, possesses within and without all the qualities that a country home ought to have—beauty, spaciousness, and comfort. It was built in the closing days of Louis XIII., and is a perfect specimen of the epoch. Madame de Sévigné saw its completion when, as Marie de Rabutin-Chantal, she came here from Bourbilly and spent the last years of her girlhood in the village. More than a century later, a letter-writer of a very different school, Diderot, dated much of his correspondence with Mlle. Voland from the château in the valley below, and some of his most embarrassing anecdotes refer to the then occupants of this place.

Our Curé is an authority in architecture and in title-deeds, and he tells us that in those days the Chapter of Paris (although the parish is no longer in the archdiocese) were the seigneurs, and a curious ecclesiastical usage has survived revolutions and republics. The Chapter presented to the church a fragment of the true cross, so the "exaltation de la Sainte Croix" became the village fête, and on Holy Cross Day, as the occupiers of the château, we had to give up a green outside the *grille d'honneur* for a noisy fair, which lasted a fortnight. M. le Curé in one respect fails in his duty. As he is approaching a venerable age, having been born under the Restoration, he ought, in compliment to his most brilliant parishioner,

to cultivate the long white locks of l'Abbé Constantin; but being well preserved and solid, he bears no resemblance whatever to Madeleine Lemaire's portraits of that worthy priest.

Between the humours of everyday life and the distant history of the past, there is a period foremost in the thoughts of all French men and women. From the terrace of the château there is a glorious view over the Marne, finer than that of the Seine from St Germain. The old trees of the park luckily hide the disgraceful Tour Eiffel, and the only monument of Paris visible from the windows is the Sacré Cœur of Montmartre. But the valley, so populous and peaceful, that lies between us and the Donjon de Vincennes on the horizon was the battlefield of Champagne. The Wurtemberg division had its headquarters here in this house, and in an attic, used by the invaders as a point of observation, one may still read names in German characters scrawled on the ceiling. We are surrounded by all the contrast and contradiction of French life. The gaiety and movement of Paris reddens the northern sky at night with the glow of its lights; below these windows, within these walls, there are pathetic memories of invasion and defeat, one day to be revenged, as the roar of the cannon from the forts protecting the capital sometimes reminds us; and behind us are boundless forests, smiling villages, fertile hills and plains—all the peaceful quiet of rural France, where the never-ending toil of the peasants amid the tranquil beauty of the landscape makes one imagine that the glitter and turmoil of the fairest of cities is as distant as the scene of battle and devastation.

EVERLYN FRANCES BODLEY.

HOW AMERICAN HISTORY IS WRITTEN.

TOWARDS History, in the different stages of its development, the reader must maintain a varying attitude. While it is yet in its panoramic stage, we need not be easily deceived: an anecdote in Herodotus, a speech in Thucydides, need not necessarily deceive us. While it is in its purely narrative stage, as in the middle ages, we are not called on to be always questioning the accuracy of the annals. But we have to be constantly on our guard when we come to modern times and writers; when history has become a system of thought, a school for politicians, a seminary for theologians; when Mr Freeman's speculations about Arminius, and his views as to the origin of the House of Lords, may be made to do duty in an agitation against one part of our constitution; when Mr Grote's views about the Greek democracy may be used for the purposes of Radical demagogues in our own day; and when Mr Gladstone's studies in history have afforded him a ready excuse for sensational experiments on the delicate machinery of our political system.

"The best historians of later times," says Lord Macaulay, "have been seduced from truth, not by their imagination, but by their reason. They far excel their predecessors in the art of deducing general principles from facts. But unhappily they have fallen into the error of distorting facts to suit general principles. They arrive at a theory from looking at some of the phenomena, and the remaining phenomena they strain or curtail to suit the theory."

The political element in history is no doubt responsible for much, if not most, of its untrustworthi-

ness. And this political element has entered into history through the open doors of a Liberalism self-devoted to the defence of every violent change which has taken place in the relations between the Crown, the Parliament, and the people during more than two centuries. It may safely be laid down as a general rule, justified by facts, that no nation ever suffered a violent disruption of any part of its constitution, or even parted violently from the course and tradition of its historic development, without entailing on itself certain and irreparable evils—not necessarily fatal, but entailing, at least, unavoidable inconveniences. Thus the Revolution of 1640 weakened the authority of the Crown; this encouraged the Revolution of 1688, which weakened the dynastic traditions; this in its turn encouraged the Revolution of 1776, which logically assailed alike the authority of the Crown and the authority of Parliament; this again encouraged the Revolution of 1789, which struck fatal blows at Crown, Legislature, law, religion, and society; this in its own turn produced its varied crop of revolutions which left not a throne in Europe unshaken, not a legislative body unassailed, not a country with its internal peace unbroken, and which checked the improvement of criminal law, the prudent enfranchisement of the people, and the revision of fiscal policy, which, but for these disturbances would have been earlier and more perfectly accomplished.

In the defence of all, or most, of these "movements" to which Liberalism generally committed itself, Liberal statesmen and writers naturally and most unfortunately

assumed a mental attitude of deference to revolutionary theories and measures, which had, and continues to have, an ill effect upon the public mind in Great Britain. It is much easier to write and speak with picturesque vehemence of the struggles of "patriots" against "oppression," than to uphold in judicious calmness the prerogatives of the Crown, the authority of Parliament, the penal force of law, the binding duty of allegiance. Most historians of England have therefore to be read with discreet caution in these days, when historical precedents drawn from revolutionary times are being energetically used for the accomplishment of violent changes in times like our own, which, after so many and such rapid and still experimental "reforms," should be times of sober progress and well-ordered improvement.

The revolutionary movement in America has had its full share of the patronage which politicians and writers in England have extended to similar "reforms." That this should be a subject of complaint now, at this late date, may seem to be superfluous; but it is not so. We have long been suffering commercially and politically, and even in literature and society, for the views, foolishly inaccurate, given by English writers to English readers concerning the American Revolution, as well as for the views, frantically inaccurate in many cases, given to American readers by American writers in justification of the hostility to British interests which has been maintained for a century and is industriously propagated to-day in every school in the Republic. It is our object in this paper to show how American history for the public is written; how from the day he enters school to the day he enters into the

struggle for life and success, a young American who follows, as he is necessarily compelled to do, the customary course of instruction, has hardly a chance to obtain other than a distorted and caricature view of the historical relations of America and Great Britain. There are in the north-western regions of Canada numbers of Indian chiefs who on gala days, when the Governor visits them, proudly display on their breasts a medal of George III., and who still proclaim that they are "George the Third's men." They are said to be unalterably loyal. A large percentage of the "educated" Americans may be said to be in the like condition. They are still in the George the Third period; still "Minute-men," still "Rifle Rangers" and "Marion's Men," and "Green Mountain Boys"; and millions of them will go to their graves with their convictions unaltered that they were the victims of British oppression and the patriots of a righteous revolution. We need hardly add that they are unalterably hostile.

The tendency to think that because the American colonies revolted with success, they also revolted with justice, has infected even the sanest of our historians in some degree. Even the Conservative Lord Mahon is led into language which, at the outset of his study of American affairs, is misleading.

"Happy," he says, "had it been for England if the views of her Ministers had at that period expanded with her territory, and led them to treat those distant settlers not as lowly dependants, but rather as fellow-subjects and freemen. Happy had they refrained from measures of aggression which, rashly urged in council, but feebly supported in war, have converted many once loyal and contented provinces into a rival empire."

This was written in 1851. Now

the colonial policy of Great Britain in 1896 differs much from the colonial policy of 1851; and the colonial policy of 1851 necessarily differed from that of 1763-76; and all that Lord Mahon's language really means is, that it would have been fortunate if the British statesmen of 1763-76 had had the ideas, the experience, and the general policy of 1851. The reader of Lord Mahon's History thus begins the account of American affairs with the wrong impression that the British Government in the period between 1763-76 was in some sense besotted because of not having such ideas, experience, and policy. This historian should have been prompt to point out that the colonial policy of England in 1763-76 was the most liberal policy then in operation among colonising nations; that every law which restricted colonial commerce restricted English commerce too — with this difference, that while the laws were most severely enforced in England, they were not enforced in the colonies; that colonial laws were very seldom annulled in England; and that the British Government were compelled to defend the colonists in all emergencies. And he was all the more bound to show these things at the outset, for the reason that all the facts subsequently related go to show in his pages that the colonists and not the mother country were to blame for the rupture which followed.

From the 'History of England from the Accession of George III.,' by John Adolphus, which appeared originally in 1802, and was republished in 1840, a good deal of valuable information might have been obtained by those who cared to seek it; but the book was not popular in character, not convenient for reference, and had no graces of style; hence it failed to win the

public ear, and was neglected by those to whom it would have been most useful. It gives an accurate account of the tea question; and the relation of the proceedings of the Privy Council against Franklin is given without prejudice to Franklin, yet with a better understanding than is usual of the offence of which he had been guilty, and of the manner in which the proceedings were conducted. This History suffered, as we have said, from the fact that it was simply an honest compilation, and was without grace of style. In more modern writers we get graces of style, but miss at times the stern accuracy of detail which ought to characterise history.

Bright's 'History of England' is wanting in regard for the British view of the American Rebellion:—

"The new imposts of 1767 had been received with great indignation by the colonies, especially in Massachusetts. There the Governor, Barnard, seems to have been totally destitute of all power of conciliation. He was backed by Lord Hillsborough, Colonial Secretary, scarcely more temperate than himself. The Assembly, in its quarrel with the Governor, issued a circular letter to the other colonies, calling for their co-operation against the new taxes. They refused to retract this step at the command of Lord Hillsborough, and were dissolved. The custom-house commissioners were foolish enough to capture and detain an illicit trader; serious riots were the consequence; the commissioners were mobbed and their houses robbed. The spirit of resistance spread. The Society of 'Sons and Daughters of Liberty,' who refused to use imported goods, multiplied in other colonies. The view of the Government was not conciliation but coercion. Troops and ships of war were crowded into Boston. In England the feeling was strongly against the Americans."

This is history in caricature. It leaves the reader under an absurdly

incorrect impression. What cause for "indignation" existed in colonies which had fully and frequently admitted the imperial authority to impose, and their own willingness to pay, some reasonable imposts as a revenue for their own defence? What could any imperial officers, political or administrative, do but dissolve a refractory Legislature? What "conciliation" was possible when the malcontents only wanted disturbance? What could customs officers do but follow their orders and enforce the laws, when the necessity arose to do so—or to abandon government altogether? One item in Bright's History is well worth noting, however. It is that which relates to the "tea-party" at Boston, about which we have heard so much, but which is so very imperfectly understood by English readers:—

"As a sort of compensation [to the India Company], a bill was brought in in their favour, by which they were enabled to export their teas from their London warehouses to the American colonies free from the English duties, and liable only to the much smaller duties to be levied in the colony. This measure would allow the India Company to get rid of a large surplus stock of tea then lying on hand, and would enable the colonists to buy their tea considerably cheaper. To the colonists, however, it bore another aspect. The whole plan seemed to them a scheme to surprise or bribe them into compliance with the very measure of taxation they were so strenuously opposing. This belief was supported by the fact that all the consignees who were to receive the tea were warm partisans of England, and was fostered by the whole body of tea-merchants and free-traders, who saw themselves likely to be driven from the market by this direct tea-trade."

It will be observed that this statement, fair in outline, yet lacks the true colour. The Boston "tea-

party" was partly business, partly barbarism. The incoming tea was good tea and cheap tea, even with the tax of threepence a pound on it. The duty was not to be paid by the people, but by the Company and the consignees. The most active "patriots" had a large stock of tea, mostly smuggled—all smuggled, in fact—on hand. If the new tea was put on the market, they stood to lose. The question of arithmetic quelled all other considerations. The vessels were attacked. The competing tea was destroyed. The system of Protection was inaugurated with a vengeance. Patriotism was gratified—and the market was saved. The Red Indian of commerce, who took his first lesson at the Boston "tea-party," has never departed from the commercial employment of our friends across the ocean. His latest exploit was the M'Kinley Bill.

The account of the same affair in Knight's 'Popular History,' which was for a long time the most generally read History of England, is also wanting in the true colour. The proceedings of the Colonial Governor and the Royal officers are related as if they were the acts of usurpers. The proceedings of conspirators without a just cause, and malcontents without a real grievance, are stated as if they had all the gravity of State affairs and all the sanction of authority:—

"On the 16th December there was a meeting in Boston of 7000 persons, who resolved that the tea should not be landed. The master of the Dartmouth was ordered to apply to the Governor for a pass for his vessel to proceed on her return voyage to London. The Governor was at his country house. Many of the leaders had adjourned to a church to await his answer. The night had come on, when Roche returned and announced that the Governor had refused him a pass, because his ship had not cleared.

There was no more hesitation. Forty or fifty men disguised as Mohawks raised the war-whoop at the porch of the church, went on to the wharf where the three ships lay side by side, took possession of them, and deliberately emptied 340 chests of tea into the waters of the bay. It was the work of three hours. Not a sound was heard but that of the breaking open of the chests. The people of Boston went to their rest as if no extraordinary event had occurred."

No one reading this account would, unless he were specially skilled in legal and constitutional studies, perceive quickly that the 7000 Bostonians had no right to "resolve" anything; that the commander of the Dartmouth was acting in terror of his life; that the Governor had absolutely no power to grant a clearance to the vessel; that the "war-whoop" business was vulgar melodrama; and that the whole affair was a compound of riot and robbery, even as stated in this History. Yet that is the true version of the affair which we have given—

"This is true criticism, and you may kiss,
Exactly as you please, or not, the rod;
But if you don't——"

Mr Lecky was exceedingly fortunate in writing at a time when the materials for history had accumulated and the danger of mistake was less. Naturally disposed to fair-play; and industriously devoted to research, he was able to see clearly the partisan character of much of American history, and to relate with brilliant fidelity the facts as they occurred, and the lessons to be learned from them. We are disposed to accept Mr Lecky's account of American affairs as on the whole the most satisfactory that has been written; because though Mr Lecky is inclined, from his general mode of thinking,

to the modern and "liberal" view of public affairs, he gives in his American chapters all the information which it was possible to obtain, and the reader is enabled to see for himself that the King and the Parliament had to deal with very indifferent subjects and very self-seeking citizens in the colonies. These gentry had the inestimable advantage of having at their service in England, and even in the service of the King and membership of Parliament, some of the ablest men in the empire. The success of the Americans in their Rebellion gave a retroactive effect and authority to the utterances of men like Chatham and Burke, who in their own day gave an encouragement to the cause of the rebellious colonists far beyond the limit to which these very distinguished men dreamed of going. And the writers of a later date have used the names of Chatham and Burke to justify the proceedings of the American rebels of that date far more radically than either Burke or Chatham would have acquiesced in. Even when most vehemently demanding the repeal of the Stamp Act, Chatham was still a statesman and a student of constitutional history and law, and had courage to say—

"At the same time, let the sovereign authority of this country over the colonies be asserted in as strong terms as can be devised, and be made to extend to every point of legislation whatsoever; that we may bind their trade, confine their manufactures, and exercise every power whatsoever—except that of taking their money out of their pockets without their own consent."

Chatham was very popular in the colonies then, as he has been in the United States since; but it must be obvious that the disturbers did not take very seriously his

disposition to "bind their trade" (for they were smugglers to a man), to "confine their manufactures" (for they were determined to manufacture, especially liquors), or to "exercise every power whatsoever" (for they were indisposed to allow any power to be exercised); while, on the other hand, they gave a liberal interpretation to his desire to save them from any taxation without their own consent—they being set against paying any taxation they could escape, even, as in the case of Pennsylvania, to save their own skins and scalps.

So much, then, for the manner in which American history was presented to British readers by British writers and public men down to a very recent period.

It was not unnatural that when American history came to be written by American writers, the encouragement to wrong thinking and rash writing afforded by British statesmen and English writers should have been gladly and fully accepted. We have lately seen a popular French *Life of Bonaparte* profusely illustrated; and in the picture of the battle of Waterloo the "British army"—represented by much smoke, a broken gun-carriage, and a few officers—is just on the point of running away,—when the Prussians arrive! This peculiar view of the great battle is no doubt widely accepted in France. It is not more absurd than the accounts of "battles" and contests, political events and personal relations, accepted by the American people as the "history" of their country and of its relations with Great Britain. But these mistaken views as to history are unfortunately the prolific causes of mistaken views in politics, and in the laws regarding commerce and international affairs; and they are therefore the more mischievous the longer they are

accepted as true. A brief account of the prime postulates of the most "popular" American historians concerning the chief events of the revolutionary period, will show the reader just how much mischief is being worked still from day to day and from year to year among the American people.

We will take the school histories first, as these are, of course, the most widely read—indeed for the bulk of the population in the United States, as in all countries, school histories are the only histories; as, after the close of the school period, any consecutive study of history may be said to be abandoned by the immense majority of the electorate.

We have at hand the histories used in the public schools of Boston and New York—*i.e.*, Sheldon's 'American History' and Montgomery's 'American History' for Boston; and Barnes's 'Brief History of the United States' for New York. It may be remarked that these are very attractive compilations for their purpose. With their merit as school-books we have no quarrel; their spirit is the objectionable thing. To begin with, the Navigation Laws are presented as bearing hard on colonial commerce: all the features unfavourable to the colonies are prominently brought forward; but not a word is said at all as to the general policy of European nations regarding their colonies at that time; nor as to the special advantages which Great Britain gave to American produce in British markets; nor as to the general, and in many cases specific and legal, consent given by the American colonies to the control of commerce and navigation in America by Great Britain; nor as to the notorious fact that the American traders carried on a systematic business in smuggling,

even with the enemies of the country that was protecting them, and that had spent enormous sums in ridding them of the rivalry and raids of the French.

That the King's officers should break open suspected places in search of smuggled goods when authorised by legal warrant to do so, is paraded as an act of illegal violence—as if that was not the duty of King's officers in England as well as in America. "They did not ask for legal proof of guilt; they entered and searched where they pleased. New England saw her trade broken up. It began to look as though the King and his 'friends' meant to ruin every merchant and shipbuilder in the country." This is Mr Montgomery's candid view of "history." It is only necessary to point out that New England trade was *not* broken up—though the smuggling was perhaps checked; and that as to the "ruin" of the merchants, they all went on making fortunes, legitimately and illegitimately, as before. Sheldon's 'American History' is more frank, but treats the subject with a sarcastic levity eminently characteristic. A specimen will suffice:—

"All these laws had been passed before the French and Indian war. Near the close of that war in 1769, George III. came to the throne of England, and he was angry enough when he was told how the colonists were cheating him out of his duties, and that too just when he was in the greatest need of money, on account of the heavy expenditure on the French and Indian war. For these Yankees, instead of carrying their sugar, molasses, and dyeing-wood into the regular ports and paying duty on them, as the law told them to do, were taking them from one colony to another quite as they liked, and landing their goods at little out-of-the-way places where the King had no custom-house officers to look after them. This was downright smuggling; and King George

III. would have none of it, and so he sent out still more officers to catch these Yankee skippers; and he gave these new officers what he called *writs of assistance*. These were legal papers giving the King's officers a right to hunt for smuggled goods in any place and at any time. These writs made the colonists very angry, and they held many meetings and made many speeches against the King."

It will be obvious that no young American would obtain much respect for law, much knowledge of colonial constitutions, much regard for the penalties of smuggling, or much truth about history, from such atrocious rubbish as this we have quoted. The young Bostonian is, however, supposed to imbibe historic sweetness and light from this compilation; and no doubt such books are widely read all over the New England States.

The young New Yorker is no better off than the young Bostonian. Barnes's 'Brief History' gives him this:—

"England treated the settlers as an inferior class of people. Her intention was to make and keep the colonies dependent. The laws were framed to favour the English manufacturer and merchant at the expense of the colonists.

"The Navigation Acts compelled the American farmer to send his products across the ocean to England, and to buy his goods in the British markets. American manufactures were prohibited. Ironworks were denounced as 'common nuisances.' . . . Smuggling had become very common, and English officers were granted 'writs of assistance' as they were called, or warrants, authorising them to search for smuggled goods. Under this pretext any petty custom-house official could enter a man's house or store at his pleasure. The colonists believed that every man's house was his castle, and resisted such search as a violation of their rights."

It will be observed that the com-

pillars of this book could never have looked at the laws they denounce, or they must have knowingly falsified their character and incidence. They acknowledge that smuggling was very general; but how indecently unfair the account they give of the means of checking it, may be judged from the account given by Mr Lecky, as follows:—

"They were general writs authorising customs officers to search any house they pleased for smuggled goods, and they were said to have been sometimes used for purposes of private annoyance. They appear, however, to have been perfectly legal; and if their employment was ever justifiable, it was in an attempt to put down a smuggling trade with the enemy in time of war."

Any organised gang of thieves in any part of the world might as well have protested against the laws which oppressed them and the officers who brought them to justice.

The "Boston Massacre" is an event very much discussed in the American school histories, and of all fraudulent attempts to create in the first instance, and to keep alive for a century after, a false indignation against the real victims of the incident, this massacre is the most preposterous. Sheldon's Boston compilation puts it this way:—

"The King now began to send troops over to Boston town, until it seemed full of redcoats; and in 1770 the troops fired on the citizens."

Barnes's New York compilation is a little more frank. It alleges:—

"Frequent quarrels took place between the people and the soldiers. One day, March 5, 1770, a crowd of men and boys, maddened by its presence, insulted the city-guard. A fight ensued, in which three citizens were killed and eight wounded. The bells were rung; the country-people rushed in to help the city; and it was with difficulty that quiet was restored."

Montgomery's compilation is as brief and as unfair as the others. It is as follows:—

"These troops were quartered in the very centre of the town, and they had frequent quarrels with the citizens. Finally (1770), a fight occurred in which the soldiers fired in self-defence, and killed several of the people. This was called the 'Boston Massacre'; the citizens never forgot or forgave the blood-stains then made on the snow of King Street."

It will be seen that the very worst side of this "massacre" is turned to the American schoolboy. He would never learn from his school-books (and will rarely read any other) that the mob amused itself by surrounding, insulting, and assaulting a solitary sentinel; that when the man called out the guard of five or six more men, the mob proceeded to further violence, insulting the soldiers, daring them to use their arms, showering snow and stones at them; that one man was struck with a club; and that not till human nature would stand no more did one soldier fire, and then the others in panic or self-defence fired too. The grossest exaggeration followed the event. "The terrible tale," says Mr Lecky, "of how the bloody and brutal myrmidons of England had shot down the inoffensive citizens on the streets of Boston raised an indignation which was never suffered to flag." And the exaggeration which marks this event is characteristic of all the other events as related in the school histories.

Let us now turn to the "tea-party" to see how this famous episode is dealt out to American youth. This is the way Barnes puts it for the young New-Yorkers:—

"The Government, alarmed by the turn events had taken, rescinded the

taxes except that on tea, which was left to maintain the principle. An arrangement was made whereby tea was furnished at so low a price that, with the tax included, it was cheaper in America than in England. This subterfuge exasperated the patriots. They were fighting for a great principle, not against a paltry tax."

That the patriots were exasperated we have no doubt; but the cause of the exasperation was one of pocket, not of principle, as has already been made pretty clear.

Montgomery puts the case in this manner:—

"This duty [on tea] was retained not for the money it would yield, but to maintain the right of the British Government to tax the colonies. The price of the tea was purposely put so low that the Americans could actually buy it, tax and all, cheaper than they could smuggle it from Holland."

Sheldon's book gives the episode in this way:—

"The trouble was now getting so serious that the King and his Ministers decided to repeal all the taxes except that on tea; for, said his Majesty, 'I am clear there must always be one tax to keep up the right, and as such I approve of the tea-duty;' and ships full of tea were sent over to Charleston, Philadelphia, Boston, and New York."

No young American would ever learn from these accounts that the tea-tax was not in this case of the slightest injury to the colonists; nor that it was accompanied by a message pledging the Government not to collect any other taxation; nor that the duty was of an "external" kind never before objected to by the colonists; nor that they had submitted to thirty-two Acts binding on their trade previous to this; nor that every step taken in the affair by the malcontents was contrary to law and contrary to common honesty, in so far as private property was wantonly de-

stroyed without compensation; nor that all the tea in the city had been smuggled; nor that the Hancock family, so prominent in this matter, had made a large fortune out of illicit trade in tea, and no doubt had a large stock on hand at the time; nor that this episode was really intended by Samuel Adams and his friends as the first step towards that rebellion which they all protested was not for a moment in their minds. There are millions of school-children in the United States now taking in for their whole lives these accounts we have quoted, who will never arrive at any further knowledge.

Other histories not specially in use in particular places, but intended for schools and popular reading, contain accounts of other events, as unfair and as false as those we have quoted. For example, Scudder's 'History of the United States, for the Use of Schools,' contains the following account of the beginning of the quarrel with Great Britain:—

"The colonies had taxed themselves to meet the expenses of the war in America. The English Government declared that the war had been fought mainly to benefit the colonies, and that the colonies ought to pay still more. It determined, therefore, to enforce more strictly those laws of trade which had hitherto brought in so much revenue."

No one would ever learn from this extraordinary statement that, for example, the Quakers of Pennsylvania would not fight at all, though the survivors of slaughtered families were crying for help against the Indians from the frontier; that the Dutch would not fight because they did not care under which king they lived; that the colonial legislatures were quarrelling with their governors over every proposition to vote a dollar or enlist a man; that

the people thwarted and robbed the very soldiers who were sent to defend them by England; that in New York the Governor had pledged his credit to provide for the support of Oswego; that the Northern colonies would not move to help the Southern colonies; that the King's soldiers had to be sent from New York to Pennsylvania; that Governor Dinwiddie of Virginia had to advance his own money to provide defence against the French; nor that the old provincial legislatures exhibited what Mr Parkman calls "an infatuated neglect" of their own safety and interests. But the little Americans will go on reading Mr Scudder.

Again, in Butterworth's 'Young Folks' History of America,' the "battle of Lexington," as it is called in the exaggerated language of American "historians," is thus described:—

"On two points the patriots were determined. They were ready to die for their country. Their captain, John Parker, had given the strictest orders that they were not to fire first. Yet the orders were hardly necessary. Major Pitcairn rode upon the common, and shouting with an oath to the 'villains' and 'rebels,' as he called them, to disperse, almost instantly ordered his soldiers to fire, and he set the example. It was murder. The captain of the Lexington company had determined to disperse his men, and when the firing began they retreated quickly," &c.

None of the young folks for whom this History was written would suspect from the above statement that the alarm of the march of the British troops to Concord had been given since midnight; that the troops had been watched; that the "Minute-men" along the line of march had been called to arms by mounted messengers; that the militia of Lexington had been specially warned to be in readi-

ness; that they did assemble in arms and order ready for fighting; that one of their number did in fact fire first, though his gun missed fire; that Major Pitcairn was as particular about firing as the colonists were; that if the troops had not been restrained, every man on the common would necessarily have been shot; and finally, to tell us that in time of excited civil strife and proximate civil war men assemble in arms *for the purpose of not firing*, is an insult to human credulity.

The war of 1812, as taught to young Americans, is of course almost equally glorious for the United States, and equally vague as to particulars. Politics enters a little into the descriptions of this war, but all have a very general resemblance. Thus, a very late volume entitled 'English History for American Readers,' by Messrs Higginson and Channing, tells the final story as follows:—

"Then, too, there was another cause of disagreement with England; for English cruisers were in the habit of stopping American ships and seizing any British seamen they found on board. As British and American seamen looked much alike, many Americans were seized, and much irritation was aroused. The war broke out in 1812," &c.

'The Household History of the United States,' by Mr Eggleston, contains the following remarks about Mr Madison's attitude in regard to the war:—

"He was lacking in military qualities, and he was forced into a war by the opinion of the country and against his own judgment, so that the President from the start was but a half-hearted leader."

Barnes's New York compilation gives the history thus:—

"The impressment of our seamen and the capture of our ships continued.

The British Government went so far as to send war vessels into our waters to seize our ships as prizes. . . . The British Government refusing to relinquish its offensive course, all hope of peace was abandoned. Finally (June 19, 1812), war was formally declared against Great Britain."

All the compilations for school purposes repeat this story of the impressment as the real cause of the war. No young American would ever find out from any of these histories that the system of impressment was a part of England's traditional policy; that it was notorious that British seamen had deserted in great numbers in American ports, and were serving on American ships; that Great Britain was engaged in a struggle with France for the liberties of Europe; that the peace party in the United States were really stronger than the war party; that the coming struggle for the Presidency gave the war party an advantage; that they threatened to desert Madison; and that to conciliate them Madison declared war. This is historical truth; but it will never reach the ears of the millions of young people who are "educated" in the common schools of the United States.

It would perhaps afford us some consolation if we could turn to the graver historians with the assurance of finding the truth stated with frankness and fulness. But we cannot be too sure. We turn to Mr Bancroft, for example, whose *History* was the first, and has remained the most remarkable, of the greater histories of the country. Mr Bancroft gives us the tea question as follows:—

"At this" (i.e., the non-importation of tea into the United States) "the King, against the opinion of Lord North and of the East India Company, directed that Company itself to

export tea to America, and there to pay the tea-duty, hoping that a low price would tempt the Americans to buy. But the colonists would not suffer the tea to be exposed for sale; the Crown officers yielded to their unanimous resistance everywhere except at Boston, and there the tea was thrown overboard."

It will be seen that Mr Bancroft adds nothing to even the simplest compilation, and we have no occasion to make another word of comment. The same historian in a hysterical mood writes thus of the expedition to Concord to destroy the stores laid up there for rebellious purposes:—

"The mighty chorus of voices rose from the scattered farmhouses, and as it were from the very ashes of the dead. Come forth, champions of liberty; now free your country; protect your sons and daughters, your wives and homesteads; rescue the houses of the God of your fathers, the franchises handed down to you from your ancestors. Now all is at stake; the battle is for all."

The simplest reader will see that this is the most inexcusable rant. There was no danger threatened to sons or daughters, to wives or homesteads; the houses of God were not assailed, and no franchises were to be broken. Nothing was in danger except the stores secretly gathered for a treasonable purpose. But this rant of Mr Bancroft continues to be read as history.

"Needless of his own danger," continues Mr Bancroft, "Samuel Adams with the voice of a prophet exclaimed, 'Oh, what a glorious morning is this!' for he saw that his country's independence was rapidly hastening on, and, like Columbus in the tempest, knew that the storm did but bear him the more swiftly toward the undiscovered world."

Very fine! but in the meantime the prudent Samuel, like Victor Hugo on a more recent occasion,

had "by advice of friends" carefully removed himself out of the reach of bullets!

There are of course some instances in which more respect is paid to historical truth. Thus Bryant and Gay's 'Popular History of the United States' admits frankly, in the case of the Boston "massacre," that the mob was the aggressor; that the soldiers were assaulted grievously by rioters largely outnumbering them; that the whole affair was grossly exaggerated; and that the punishment of the two soldiers who were "convicted" and branded on the hand was unjust. Hildreth, in his 'History of the United States,' admits that "a mob of men and boys, encouraged by the sympathy of the mass of the inhabitants, made it a constant practice to insult and provoke them"—i.e., the soldiers. In dealing with the war of 1812, a disposition to be fair is also exhibited by the more important writers. Thus Mr McMaster, in his 'History of the People of the United States,' admits that "the time had come when the question of peace or war depended quite as much on the President as on Congress." He shows, in brief, that the Presidential election was coming on; that if Jefferson was elected the war party would smash up; that Madison was for a time deemed doubtful; that Henry Clay and his friends threatened to forsake him in caucus if he did not proclaim war.

"That the story is true," he says, "cannot be positively stated. It was, indeed, openly stated in Congress. A member of the House even claimed to have been one of those who made the threat. It is certain that Clay did place before Monroe a plan of action which he misled the Administration to adopt. It is certain that the plan was followed. It is certain that no

caucus was held till, by following it, Madison had fully committed himself to war; and it is certain that in the caucus the war members gave him a warm support. Yet all this does not prove that Madison was coerced."

A great minority—perhaps a majority—of the people of the United States interpreted the situation fairly enough when they called the war of 1812 "Mr Madison's war." It was waged for the purpose of his election. If he was "coerced," he had an easy way out of the corner—he could have retired from public life rather than shed blood and plunge an unprepared country into a war of unknown possibilities. But he wanted to be elected, and, in order to secure election, he consented to declare war: crying he would ne'er consent, he consented. Mr Hildreth is more emphatic than Mr McMaster.

"The war," he says, "must not seem to be forced on the President; it must be not their war [i.e., the Clay party's], but his. A committee headed by the imperious Clay waited upon him with assurances to that effect. He must consent to yield to a declaration of war, or they would not support him as President. To this hard condition Madison yielded; and the preliminaries thus arranged, the caucus was presently held."

None of these explanations, confessions, modifying circumstances, and truthful colourings will ever reach the millions of citizens of America who have been brought up on school compilations in the past, or who are being educated by means of the books we have quoted. The traditions of hatred established in Boston after the "massacre," for purely selfish and financial and personal purposes, will be continued from generation to generation, or till a generation shall arise which will have honesty enough to fling

the school-books where they flung the tea so long ago—*i.e.*, into the sea—and provide the children with some truthful history. The pity of it is, that in the meantime every international question that may arise between the United States and Great Britain will be discussed by politicians who, knowing better themselves, will still keep in view the "Minute-men" and "Rifle Rangers," the "Green Mountain Boys" and the "Swamp Foxes of Marion."

This disposition of the politicians is inveterate, since hostility to Great Britain is so often the "Cheeshire cheese" from which, in the absence of better food, they may cut and come again, as Laurence Sterne hath it. Quite recently there has come from the Government press at Washington a republication, in six volumes, of the *Revolutionary Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States*, edited under the direction of Congress by (the late) Dr Francis Wharton. The general object of this republication is to correct the mistakes and mis-statements of Mr Jared Sparks, who in 1818 edited the *State Papers of the United States*. Mr Sparks is charged with having omitted letters, and portions of letters, tending to show, among other things—

"1st. The movement of French politicians in 1776 to supersede Washington by Marshal Broglie.

"2d. The movement of American politicians in 1776-77 to induce Washington's withdrawal and to have Franklin recalled from Paris.

"3d. The atrocities of British troops and of refugees in the United States put forward by our diplomats as a claim against Great Britain and a set-off against British claims for indemnity to loyalists."

We have not space to discuss this publication at length; but we may point out that the ob-

ject of the third paragraph is fulfilled, as far as may be, with a cool effrontery and a bitter hostility that might more fitly have characterised Samuel Adams in the midst of the Revolutionary struggle than Dr Wharton or any other sane man in the peace of the nineteenth. "Brutality," "robbery," "forgery," "rape," "dissoluteness," "ingratitude," "profligacy," "plundering," "wickedness"—these are the crimes charged freely against British commanders, officers, and politicians engaged in the war. These charges are made chiefly on the statements of Judge Jones, a "loyalist" historian of New York, who is admitted by Dr Wharton to have been, "when his History was written at the close of the war, much embittered against the Howes and against Clinton, to whose mismanagement he charged many British disasters." A large allowance must naturally be made in such a case. Curiously enough, we find Mr Gladstone called as a witness in the case, by the citation of his words in the "Bulgarian atrocities" business—*i.e.*, "that it is monstrous to place on the same footing the cruelties of the oppressed and the cruelties of the oppressor"; the object of the American editor being to represent the rebels of 1776 as the innocent Bulgarian, and the British troops as the "unspeakable Turk"!

In this country we need a little teaching in American history also, for a very large section of the people are half impressed with the American, not the British, view of American history; and not a few politicians have pondered to that belief. For the purpose of giving many readers a fair opportunity of getting at the truth about American affairs, we may in conclusion call attention to Mr Goldwin Smith's late work on the *Political History of the*

United States. For the first time in our literature a book has appeared which, coming from a distinguished and able man of sincere character and strong opinions—who has always been and still remains a friend of the United States—has put the history of that country before American readers in a manner which has made them think, and before English readers in a manner which may be accepted as correct. If this work could be made a text-book at universities and schools in both countries, we would expect in the course of a generation to find the path to peace much easier, the difficulty of friendly agreement growing less and less. Mr Goldwin Smith has offended somewhat against British feeling in advocating a policy towards the United States which would cost us in due time the allegiance of

our richest and most loyal colony. He has done something to repair his fault by maintaining with ability the cause of the integrity of this Kingdom. He has still further commended himself to us by publishing a volume which has placed within easy reach of most readers an acceptable account of a century-old struggle, the history of which has been too long understood to the disadvantage of Great Britain.

Nothing is more important to the future relations of the two great divisions of the English-speaking race than that they should not misunderstand each other's history, and entertain falsehood for truth and prejudice for principle. This slight contribution to right thinking on the subject of history may at least serve as a reminder that wrong thinking has too long prevailed.

THE BIG GAME OF SOUTH AFRICA.

HALF a century, and more, has passed since the British sportsman was aroused to the wealth that awaited him in the forests and veldts of South Africa, and the prospect then seemed to be rather a beatific vision than realities within the range of accomplishment. Narratives like that of Sir Cornwallis Harris, and still more the adventures of Gordon Cumming, came upon us with all the freshness of Romance, and with not a little of its illusion. It was the discovery of a new world of Sport, but a world still begirt by the remoteness, difficulties, and dangers which, while they fire the hunter's ambition, also place serious obstacles in the way of its gratification. But to indicate a new field of adventure is to open it up to the Anglo-Saxon spirit. Once Harris and Gordon Cumming had shown to others emulous of imitating their example how they too might take the field with good chances of success, the new ground was too fruitful to remain long fallow. How much of the greatness of our South African empire, with its boundary already on the Zambesi, should in justice be credited to the savage denizens of its forests, whose attractions, perhaps even more than the solid prospects of fortune realisable from the resources of the country, have drawn the youth and strength of Britain towards South Africa, with British power and British capital in its wake?

Every succeeding year since Gordon Cumming's time has seen

an increasing number of hunters exploiting the preserves of South Africa: professional hunters who make their sporting tastes pay by bringing their spoils to market; naturalists not a few—and dead shots many of these are—in quest of new discoveries or seeking to secure a specimen of some animal rapidly being thinned down to the verge of extinction; the prospector, whose aims are not always so upright as could be wished; the geographical explorer, and the hard-working colonist, glad to escape from cattle and crops and their contingent worries for a month or two among the big game of the bush. All these have been hard at work, and have left their traces upon the numbers of the fauna of the country, if not upon the annals of its sport, with such deadly effect that game laws have had to be introduced to regulate their ardour; and with the prospect of a possible future when the lion and the leopard on the banks of the Limpopo may be as jealously preserved as a fox in the Pytchley or the Quorn country.

Your true South African hunter is generally something more than a shooter, whose sole aim and object is to "break the record" in big bags, and to astound the world with the heads and skins which he brings back with him as the trophies of his rifle. Not that we wish to decry these very laudable ambitions, which must animate every sportsman. But we are unreasonable enough, or prejudiced enough if you please,

¹ In *Haunts of Wild Game: A Hunter-Naturalist's Wanderings from Kahlamba to Libombo*. By Frederick Vaughan Kirby, F.Z.S. (Maqaqamba). William Blackwood & Sons, Edinburgh and London. 1895.

to think a good book the best memorial that a hunter can produce of his prowess. We acknowledge the unreason, for many mighty hunters, gifted with the instincts of the true sportsman which elevate the chase above the level of a mere savage warfare with wild beasts, handle the pen much less effectively than the rifle. But there are others who take with them an artist's eye for the manifold and ever-varying moods of Nature in her African solitudes, who follow the spoor in a spirit of chivalrous knight-errantry, and value most the victories they have won in fair and equal fight, when the foe is brought to bay in his lair, and life is matched for life. Foremost among such hunters in South Africa in our days stands Mr Selous; while the handsome volume now lying before us will be readily acknowledged by its readers to be Mr Kirby's patent to rank as Mr Selous's peer.

So much has been written of hunting in South Africa, and so familiar are we already with the typical perils and adventures that lie in the way, that we look as much to the writer as to the subject for supplying the requisite interest. Mr Kirby fully answers expectation in this respect. Whether we are following the trekking hunting-waggon through veldt and forest, pressing up on the spoor of some hill-leopard or fierce old bush-boar, seated round the blazing logs in a Kafir kraal after supper has been despatched, when the talk of big game slain and yet to fall goes round with pipes and whisky in a modest libation, or in the dark still hours of watching and waiting by "the kill," when every sense is strained to its highest tension for some signal of the coming visitant,—we should seek

for no more pleasant companion than the writer of this volume. With rare skill, which comes of a purely natural gift, for the author seems too unconscious of his literary powers to be suspected to have sought to turn them to effect, Mr Kirby infuses a complete sense of companionship into his reader's mind, and so carries him away, that it is with difficulty the latter can disabuse himself of the feeling that he has been a real and active participant in the adventures and exploits through which he has been conducted. Surely we, too, were in that great hunt when, starting from 'Mgiyo's mealie-gardens in the dim, wan misty morning, and hunting our way to the hill-top over the deep, dense-wooded kloof, with the cloud-caps hanging over Legokoti, Manungu, the weird "Ship Mountain," and the serried peaks of Swaziland well in our view to the south-east after the haze had lifted, when the welcome shout of "Hlanganisani!" (Surround!) told us that the beaters were driving the pigs down in our direction; and when the tough old boar, with 'Mqedsa's assegai in his shoulder, and Rover's teeth in his flank, went rolling sheer over the bank—boys and dogs—into the stream, where they were all joined in an inextricable *melee*, until Kirby leaped down and drove his assegai with all his strength into the old tusker's neck. And that death-and-life struggle by night among the thick patch of thorns on the bank of the kloof, when, after two miss-fires and the breaking of an assegai, Kirby found himself in hand-to-hand grips with a wounded and furious leopardess—we must have seen it somehow or other, pitch-dark though it was, with the bodily eye. That great moonlight ad-

venture, when the troop of ten lions came down to "the kill," with the huge heavy-maned lion in command, and the lioness with gleaming eyes peering through the thorns of the *scherm* at the silent watcher seated within—we, too, must have been there;—Whymper, likewise, for how else could he have so powerfully represented with his pencil the awe-inspiring idea of the situation? But should we be found to be entertaining illusions upon the subject, Mr Kirby's fascinating narrative sufficiently accounts for them.

Mr Kirby, who, when at home in his happy hunting-grounds, rejoices in the name of "Maqaqamba," which being interpreted would, we presume, be, "a capital fellow without fear and a dead shot,"—so much our very strictly limited command of the Kafir language would seem to suggest to us,—Mr Kirby, we say, has his special beats in the country between Kahlamba and Libombo—that is, the region of plateaux running from the eastern sides of the Drakenberg range until bounded by the lower range of the Libombo, which looks towards the seaboard. The country between these two parallel ranges, so far as Mr Kirby's book goes, is closed in at its north and south extremities by the Oliphants and the Sabi rivers respectively. An idea of this country of *krantzies* and *kloofs*, of hill and valley, may be quickly gathered from the annotations with which Mr Kirby, after the manner of the earlier cartographers, has indorsed his map. "Open ridges and thin bush" we meet with in one place; then comes a river, "dry in May-December"; here is "open bush," there a tract "densely wooded." "Dense thorn-bush" is a characterisation of iterated occurrence. But to make up for these unpromising

entries, we come upon such notes, interspersed with the natural features, as "lions very numerous," "giraffe in 1887," "white rhino numerous," "black rhino," "lions numerous;" while in the text we are told that there are koodoo in the hills, buffalo in the thickly bushed kloofs, and bush-pig everywhere. Leopards and cheetas are encountered both on the high ridges and the foothills, as well as in the low country. The wildebeeste still roams in herds in the *krantzies*, while the smaller antelopes of the country are numerous. But, as everywhere else in the vicinity of the European sportsman, the game is sensibly diminishing in numbers, and our author tells us that he has hunted black rhinoceros in places where he would now be scarce likely to raise a single reedbuck. The game is retreating before the advance of civilisation, and since the Transvaal railway from Lorenzo Marquez skirts the southern boundary of the country, there is a probable time coming when such names as Eland Kopjes, Wild-Cat Camp, and Rhino Spruit will be the sole memorials of its former fauna. As for the physical features of the country which the hunter has to encounter, the names of such localities as "Hell's Gates," "the Shoot," "the Devil's Pass," and "the Devil's Knuckles," supply a graphic description in themselves.

This diminution of the numbers of game, even to the verge of extinction in the case of some animals, is one of the subjects connected with South African sport which gives rise to reflection. To the earlier hunters the prospect of sport was practically unlimited and apparently inexhaustible. The war with wild beasts stood then on a much fairer footing, and the advantages were mostly on the side

of the game. The distances that had to be traversed, the difficulties in travel, the primitive character of their equipment as compared with the deadly weapons in the hands of the latter-day hunter, and their ignorance of the haunts and habits of the fauna, were all odds in favour of the hunted. It was with Nature herself, too, that the severest part of their struggle had to be carried on. Within her own undisturbed domains her economy is perfect. The question of population is adequately balanced by the presence of the migratory animals and by the swiftness and capabilities for eluding enemies on the part of their gaminivorous prey. But against the poaching intruder, man, Nature has set up her own game laws, with heavy penalties for the breach of them. The remote and difficult regions where she protects her brute family are the home of deadly malaria in its worst form, and they are shut off by the tsetse-infested districts so fatal to the hunter's horses and bullocks. "The fly," says Mr Kirby, "has done more for the preservation of the game than all the game laws ever framed." But it is the glory of man with his resources of civilisation to overcome the opposing forces of Nature, and in her South African preserves, localities where fifty years ago there was only the "gloom" of the leopard or the whistle of the reed-buck to break the primeval silence, now resound to the "oath of British commerce and the accents of Cockaigne" booming "Kafir" shares or stocks. Even in the country which Mr Kirby has more immediately under his eye, the great game of the bush is thinning out under the breath of a civilisation which has barely reached it:—

"I can well remember how fourteen years ago the eastern portion of the Transvaal was a perfect paradise for

big game of all descriptions—elephant, rhinoceros, hippopotami, buffalo, giraffe, eland, roan and sable antelope, and in fact all the species of antelope peculiar to those regions. Now, alas! we speak of all these animals, with the exception of the giraffe and sable antelope, as we do of the deinotherium, megatherium, and the dodo,—things that *have* been. There are still a few spots where buffalo may be obtained in very limited numbers—such as the dense bush along the Sabi river, a few kloofs at the foot of the Kahlamba, and in some stretches of country here and there along the upper Limpopo. High up on the Sabi river, where it passes through the rough foothills of the Berg, are numerous deep dark kloofs of great extent, wherein troops of buffalo—or elephant either, for that matter—might wander in perfect security; for no one ever attempts to go into such places except on occasions when a beat is organised for driving buffalo. So it is very seldom the animals get disturbed, and, if care is taken, the preserve may eventually prove invaluable."

And here is a problem which will force itself before long on the consideration of authority. Must we stand indifferently aside and witness the ever-increasing rapidity with which the interesting if not always inoffensive fauna of the South African wilds are being reduced to extinction; and is it possible, if we would, to conserve a proportion of the game sufficient to satisfy the appetite of the hunter without restricting a quickly advancing civilisation? Between the lion or the leopard and man there is no possibility of arriving at a *modus vivendi*. The bush-pig's existence is destructive to cultivation, and other game are detrimental to growing crops. Then, if the destruction of game proceeds faster than the extension of cultivation, what in the meantime becomes of that part of the native population which still depends to a considerable extent

upon hunting for its food! It would be no easy matter to devise a code of game laws that would embrace all interests and be efficacious. The game laws of the Transvaal Republic, passed in 1892, seem to have aggravated rather than arrested the extermination of already limited *genera*. When a licence of £10 was exacted for liberty to shoot buffalo, rhinoceros, eland, and giraffes, the hunter naturally sought to get the worth of his money out of these animals, regardless of the fact that they were being wiped out of existence. An amendment has recently been made reserving the four classes of game above mentioned, while a £3 licence covers all other game, a £1, 10s. licence giving power to kill the smaller game only, such as reedbuck, bushbuck, or duiker. But who is to control the hunter at large in the bush, with rifle in hand and opportunity before him? The most conscientious sportsman, when he suddenly starts a grand head of the forbidden game, will hardly be able to steel himself against the excitement of trying conclusions with the contraband quarry. Mr Kirby is opposed to wanton slaughter, and he has a naturalist's antipathy to exterminating types; but he too is mortal, and has to admit the strong temptation, while he confesses his own lapses. Hear what he says about that beautiful and unique creature the giraffe, that has survived the ruin of an older world only to meet extinction in this age:—

"Very great difference of opinion exists amongst sportsmen as to whether giraffe-hunting is a pursuit which can be indulged in with a clear conscience, and the fact that the question should arise points to some grounds for reasonable doubt. It is, I believe, by many considered the

ne plus ultra of African sport, and by those, too, who could not possibly be guilty of wanton cruelty. Certainly one can scarcely consider it an elevating form of sport—too often it is lowering for the giraffe, as well as for horse and rider—for it calls forth neither endurance, courage, nor extraordinary skill on the part of the hunter. Practically speaking, if he has a good horse which he can stick to, and can hit a haystack, there is not the slightest reason why he should not count his slain giraffe by the score. At the same time, it is not to be denied that there is something wonderfully fascinating and keenly exciting in a flying race on a good horse after a troop of these animals. The country through which the chase leads, the wonderful effect caused by the great-striding, swaying troop in front of one, the feeling of exultation inseparable from a stiff gallop on a good mount, all combine to render attractive that which comes perilously near to deserving a very different name. It is certain that all the interest of the sport is centred in the run, for when once the giraffe is brought to a stand nothing but honest pity can be felt for its beautiful, stately helplessness. None with any real English grit in them will pretend that they derive from the fall of one of these great harmless creatures the same amount of satisfaction afforded by the death of a lion or a buffalo. But all our hares cannot be buffalo, nor our foxes lions, so it is not well to set up too high a standard. To those who enjoy an exciting race on a good horse over rough country, giraffe-hunting offers great, almost unequalled, attractions; the only question is, whether the feeling of pity for its resultant death does not outweigh the previous short-lived pleasure. It is so easy to take life, so impossible to restore it by endless regrets."

But "Buka, baas, buka, nanti 'tihuha!" ("Look, sir, look, there's giraffe!"), cries Muntumuni, and away fly conscience, philosophy, and all such abstract considerations, and Kirby gets well down in the saddle, crams his old *terai* on tightly, takes a firm grasp of

the rifle, and settles down for a spin after the *kameel*, marking an old bull, who, with a swish of the tail and clattering hoofs, dashes off downhill for the stony creek below. He must be rounded off from that route at all cost. "So-ho, Moscow, my boy; now for it!" and they tear away down the rough steep slope, cutting up the turf on every side, at a terrific pace, regardless of ant-bear holes, any one of which may bring the chase to a hasty termination:—

"To describe the movements of that fine troop would be, for me, impossible, for so constantly and rapidly do their positions change that the eye cannot pick out any certain one or follow its actions accurately. It is just a great mass of swaying, surging life, topped by long necks, and borne along with seven-league strides, apparently ever in each other's way, yet never fouling, never slackening speed. And what a play of colour is there! The old bull, as he runs neck and neck with two fawn-coloured cows, looks black as raven's plume. A brilliant chestnut cow crosses him; without check he swings to the right, and at once the deep black becomes richest glowing orange-brown: then as he strides out half-left—after passing with graceful sweep of his great neck under the clustering branches of a widespread thorn-tree, close to which he has had to run to avoid trampling a half-grown thing that has been striving to keep pace with one of the older cows, doubtless its mother—he heads his two former companions, and the glancing sunlight flashes over him and robes him in silver sheen. Such toning, mingling, and changing of colours—the eye is dazzled with their wonderful beauty!"

But the pace is killing, and as the giraffe reach the creek some of them turn back; but the doomed bull and some others clear the creek in a stride, and are galloping for the thorn-trees on the ridge. Moscow took the creek with a half length to spare, but stumbles heavily as he lands on some slip-

pery stones on the other side. Kirby is almost on his neck, his stirrup-irons nearly touch the ground; but the good horse rights himself in an instant, and on they dash again faster than ever, scattering the blue wildebeeste on either side, as, reckless of them, they race through a herd. The giraffe are into the thorn-bush,—then, "Down, down low on your horse's neck, if you don't wish to emulate Absalom in this strip of bush." Beyond is a wide burnt-up area, and the giraffe throw up behind them a dense cloud of dusty ash as they cross it. They are almost invisible in the blinding obscurity, so beware of riding too closely on their powerful heels, for a shot is impossible until they come out into clearer air. But the cloudy belt is past, and as they break away for another cover, it is time to do something. Moscow quickly responds to the hint which the spur gives him for the first time, and in another instant is in the middle of the scattering fugitives. Before the horse has stopped, Kirby is on the ground, and a bullet is in the old bull's back, while a cow receives a shot in the small ribs. To the saddle again quickly, and race these four who have broken away for a strip of bush beyond, and whom Muntumuni is striving to head back; and another bull falls dead to a bullet through the shoulder as he attempts to break away. But the bull first wounded must be looked after, and he has still got it in him to lead us another race down a rough stony slope. Kirby is almost alongside of him when a big ant-bear hole suddenly yawns in front. Moscow clears this gallantly, but slips among some hidden stones on the other side, and lo! there is another ant-bear hole immediately beyond. Neither horse nor man is equal for such an

emergency. "We are not long in parting company: Moscow turns a complete somersault, whilst I fly yards over his head, and come down a regular crowner. My plucky nag soon rises and shakes himself, but for a few moments I cannot do the one, and do not need to do the other, it having been already well done for me." But there is no time for star-gazing, for there is the poor old bull, with swaying neck, drooping tail, and knocking knees, standing sixty yards away, looking on with stupefied amazement at these evolutions. A sharp report, and the poor brute is put out of misery. It has been an entrancing chase and a magnificent finish, and now that it is over and enthusiasm has sped its flight, let Mr Kirby regain his finer feelings and look with moving pity upon his handiwork:—

"How can one look unmoved at this great noble creature, practically devoid of weapons of defence, when, hopeless of escape, he slackens speed and turns round to face you squarely, without shrinking, without sound, without attempt at revenge, whilst the great tear-drops course one another down its face, welling from soft, dark, languishing eyes that have not their equal for beauty upon earth? Can you look on your handiwork without a feeling of deepest pity, fatal to all pleasure, and of regret that the first cruel shot has ever been fired? Merely the freak of a fanciful mind, is it? I should be loth to think so, even though you who do will take keener delight in giraffe-hunting than I. But do not believe it—the capacity to enjoy life, innate in all animals, could not exist apart from the consciousness of pain and death; and if ever the crested front and lowered horns of the wounded sable, and the flashing eyes and gleaming teeth of the stricken lion at bay, meant revenge first, death afterwards, surely then the tearful eyes, the twitching mouth, the quivering limbs of the helpless giraffe, as it stands with reddened

sides—gazing down, one can imagine, half scornfully, half beseechingly—express wonder at man's inhumanity besides its own bitter pain!"

These are noble sentiments; but will they prevail when Mr Kirby next hears the stirring cry of "Buka, baas, nanti 'tihuha" ring over the veldt? We could almost feel angry with him for having carried us away in his exciting chapters on giraffes until we became *participes criminis*, so to speak,—grew as forgetful as himself for the moment of those afterthoughts that had inevitably to be reckoned with when the blood has had time to cool down.

If all sportsmen were possessed of the same sentiments as Mr Kirby, —notwithstanding his occasional lapses from virtue in the case of giraffes, who, we are inclined to think, must waylay him in the same determined fashion as rabbits used to accost Master David Llewellyn in the 'Maid of Sker,'—we should look with more confidence to the future of big game in South Africa.

But to be distinguished from the true sportsman, who finds his chief charm in hunting in the occasion which it calls forth for the exercise of his manly qualities, his patience, endurance, skill, coolness, and fortitude, "who will feel more true pleasure in securing one good trophy than in laying low scores of animals which carry none," a much more destructive agent is at work whom Mr Kirby very patly classes as "the gunner." Big bags and beating the record are the rather ignoble objects of the gunner's ambition; and if he is handy with his tools, as he very often is, he may work an incalculable amount of indiscriminate havoc in the bush. He shoots at everything standing on four legs, and is quite indifferent as to the result, provided only that

it adds another head of game to his bag. A buffalo's head is often one of his most coveted objects; and whether a cow is in calf or not, he will not stop to inquire. He has almost exterminated this animal in the Transvaal, and thinned out the eland and roan antelope. For the Boer farmer, when he takes to the hunting-veldt, there is sufficient excuse, for he must have meat, and he naturally gives the preference to venison over killing his own cattle. He wants money, which the heads and hides will fetch in the market. Besides, he knows what he is about, and kills with a definite and justifiable object, if not always with due moderation. As for any justification that the mere "gunner" has, or thinks he has, that Mr Kirby considers is a moot-point.

Mr Kirby's volume covers the whole field of South African sport, except elephant-hunting, which is a thing of the past in the country where he ranges, although five years ago some Boer hunters met with a herd of fifty on the Timbati, a river flowing north-eastward into the Oliphants through the lion and low-country tracts of the Bush-veldt. The first part of the work is given up to the game of the krantz and kloof country, the broken "foothills" of the Kahlamba and Libombo ranges. Here the mountain reedbuck, the vaal rhé buck, and the koodoo—the finest trophy that can fall to the lot of the hunter in these regions—the 'msumbi or bush-duiker, the oribi, and the swift klipspringer and their congeners, are numerous, and yield exhilarating sport both in stalking and hunting, or, as is generally the case, in the two combined. Here, too, the leopard and the cheeta are met with, especially in the "foothills" or lower ranges, with buffalo in the thick valleys and bush-pig

roaming everywhere. Down in the low Bush-veldt, to which Mr Kirby devotes the second part of his work, we again come upon many of the same animals, some of them differing markedly from the hill varieties, with the blue wildebeeste, the giraffe, the sable antelope, with lions along the river banks, and hippopotami in their lower reaches. The bush-pig is more rarely encountered in the low country, and both species of rhinoceros may be regarded as extinct.

Mr Kirby concludes his work with five chapters on lion-hunting, which will perhaps be the most valuable to the ambitious hunter, as they are the most interesting to the general reader. Gordon Cumming was in his day *par excellence* "the lion-slayer"; and if the title were in succession, either Mr Selous or Mr Kirby would have indisputable pretensions to the designation. The younger sportsmen have, however, a great advantage in the excellence and choice of weapons for their equipment. The choice nowadays is so extensive that each particular build of rifle and cast of bullet have their own enthusiastic advocates. Mr Kirby discusses the question of large-*versus* small-bore rifles with an authority due to his long experience. His own predilections are for Gibbs' Metford rifles of .461 bore, which he has used for years for all thin-skinned game, lions, and leopards; and he considers a .450 "the very smallest bore that a man should take in hand for use upon game of any size." If we remember rightly, a two-grooved double-barrel by Dickson of Edinburgh, compared with which he considered the old style of rifle as a pop-gun, was the favourite weapon with which Gordon Cumming performed many of his chief exploits. Sir Samuel Baker tells

us that Oswell, the friend of Dr Livingstone and a famous African hunter in his day, carried a favourite Purdey, a smooth-bore double-barrelled gun sighted like a rifle, and carrying a spherical ball of No. 10 with 6 drachms of powder. But these were weapons of the pre-breechloading period, which raise our admiration for their owners as we gaze upon their antique forms. For the artillery of our own day we must refer the inquiring reader to Mr Kirby's chapter on rifles, as also for the valuable counsels which he gives about hunting equipments, the preservation of skins and heads, and the management of trophies.

Though not to be classed among big game, the bush-pig is in Mr Kirby's opinion the pluckiest and the most sporting animal among the lesser fauna, and indeed, from experiences here recorded, he seems not unworthy of his relationship to his more respected kinsman of the Indian jungles. But we have to suppress a feeling approaching to a shudder when we read that it is the practice in South Africa to put a bullet into him by way of bringing him to bay—an idea that would be viewed with horror by any right-thinking "first spear" of the Calcutta Tent Club. But African kloofs are unfavourable to canonical pig-sticking; and even an Anglo-Indian sportsman could look on with approbation when the attack is made on foot with a stabbing assegai on such a dauntless opponent as Mr Kirby describes:—

"And when he makes up his mind to fight, it is to the bitter end; no odds he considers too great for him—he would face a regiment in line, or a battery of artillery in position! Woe to the rash hounds that come within reach of his champing jaws and gleaming tusks; it will surely

be many a long day before they ever take the field again, even if lucky enough to escape with their lives! He has no idea of flinching, but just backs into a thick bush, or against a rock or tree, and with desperate, dogged determination fights to the death, which he meets with a grim silence worthy of a better fate."

To tackle such an ugly customer with an assegai is a true sportsmanlike feat; and the dogs are sometimes frightfully mauled and torn in the struggle. The pig fights not only with his tusks but with his teeth, and dogs' legs are bitten through and stout assegai-shafts snapped off above the blade sometimes. It does not seem, however, that the South African pig will charge his assailant with the same overt intention as the Bengal boar frequently displays, though when beset at close quarters and in desperation he will turn, charge, and rip up anything that comes in his way. On one occasion, which Mr Whympers has very spiritedly illustrated, a great boar, into which a bullet had been already dropped, came rushing close past Mr Kirby, who planted a 20-inch assegai with all his might in the brute's back. The pig, with a lurch and a wrench, dragged the weapon out of his hands, upsetting Kirby himself at the same time. He then turned and charged back again atop of the prostrate hunter, until the assegai, still sticking in his back, brought him up at the reed fringe of the bush. Kirby, quickly on his feet again, snatched a light assegai and drove it into the boar's shoulder, where it broke, the boar once more breaking away and carrying with him the back of the hunter's shirt, who had himself barely escaped the tusks. He then posted himself against a steep where he could only be approached on his

left and front, as Kirby, with two of his Kafir boys, assegais in hand, again rushed in upon him. But it was not until he had bitten through two of the assegai shafts, "and given other evidence of what he could do with a man's legs if he had the chance," that the tenacious animal gave in. "I was in tatters," says Kirby, "both as regards my clothes and flesh; but in the moment of victory one thinks very little of such matters." There are numerous other equally exciting episodes of bush-pig hunting in these chapters, which we should not tire of rehearsing, if space only permitted us.

The leopard has never been held in high estimation by sportsmen; but from the arguments that Mr Kirby puts before us we agree with him that the depreciation which is generally cast upon this animal as an object of sport is undeserved. Where tigers are to be met with, the leopard is of course game of secondary interest. This we believe to be the reason why the leopard is so little noticed by Indian sportsmen, who comparatively seldom hunt him except when his depredations have become vexatious, or when in his old age he turns out a man-eater, as is frequently the case in Central India. But, according to Mr Kirby's observations, the Kahlamba-Libombo leopard is an animal of another stamp of character, though our author contends for the identity of the African and Indian forms, allowing for differences in dimensions, coloration, and habits. That marked differences exist in the habits and temperament of the two seems very evident, and these appear altogether in favour of the African leopard as a sporting animal. No previous writer on African sport has had so much experience of the leopard, or has devoted so much attention to his

character, as is evinced in the five very fascinating chapters in which Mr Kirby treats of the hill and low-country leopards. These chapters will, if we mistake not, have considerable influence on African sport, and lead to a reconsideration of ideas regarding it. Though the Kahlamba-Libombo ranges afforded no other game except the leopards, many sportsmen would think themselves well repaid by even a moiety of such adventures as Mr Kirby has met with in his pursuit of "Spots."

That the African leopard is not the cowardly sneaking brute that he has been maligned as being, is proved by Mr Kirby's experiences. He is unmatched for his cunning wiles; he is as prudent as he is wary; his noiseless invisible snake-like approach and sudden and unexpected spring cannot be held indicative of a skulking nature or craven heart. His regard for self-preservation is not stronger than in animals of much higher repute, —the elephant, for instance, which will fly from the sound of the human voice. "My experience," says Mr Kirby, "points to the fact that, for all his innate wariness and stealthy cunning, the leopard is an incredibly daring brute, and will usually show fight where a far larger and more powerful animal would try to back out of it." There seems, however, to be this qualification to the assertion, that if their first attack fails they will not renew it—a trait we believe to be generally characteristic of the Indian leopard also; "but if they once lay hold, they are not deterred by the fact that the game seems going against them, but will fight with implacable fury."

And now for a day with Mr Kirby among his leopards, that we may judge for ourselves whether he

is right in his assertion that when they have made up their minds to fight they will give the sportsman "plenty of fun for his money." Hunting the leopard, it may be remarked, is often vain work, unless you have certain news of his immediate whereabouts, and you most frequently drop upon him where you least expect to meet him. The morning is deliciously cool, soft mists hang over the valleys, and the grass is heavy with dew, as Kirby, with a couple of Swazis, one of whom is the brave warrior Nogwaja, the Hare, and four dogs, the dauntless Rover for certain among them, start for a hunting-meet at a neighbouring kraal. The road is an up-and-down one, through gorge after gorge, till, dipping into a deep ravine, it breasts the face of a steep krantz, along the summit of which the hunters walk until they reach a point which overlooks the narrows of the gorge beneath. All nature is still, except for here and there a bushbuck who has come out from his lair to warm himself in the young sunshine, or a little duiker daintily treading among the scrub. Only the baboons down below in the upper part of the kloof are unusually noisy and excited. Suddenly Nogwaja hoarsely whispers "Ingwe" (leopard), as he grasps Kirby's arm and points up the kloof. Nearly five minutes of intense gazing discovers nothing, and Kirby is about to put up his glasses, when the leopard is descried 150 yards distant walking out of a little gully, and making for a denser part of the kloof. He has not yet seen his enemy. To kneel down, aim steadily, and fire, is the work of an instant. "'Gad! what a commotion followed that shot!" But above its echoes in the kloof, above the harsh cries of the startled ibis and the yelling and screeching of the baboons, rose

the wrathful growls of the wounded leopard, whose foreleg is broken, "the ulna and the radius being reduced to pulp." "Pansi—i pansi!" ("Down—he's down!") is the cry; but the more experienced Nogwaja is doubtful. If he is able, he will make for that gap in the krantz, for there is safety in the thick bush beyond should he reach it. The boys and the dogs go down into the kloof, while Kirby remains above, intently watching their motions. Speedily the dogs give tongue as they catch up the spoor, and now their savage barking tells that they have the leopard at bay. Kirby frets that he has not gone down into the thick of the sport, but it is now too late to change his position. The barking stops, the leopard is again moving, and once more the voices of the dogs tell that they have brought him up:—

"Three times the leopard thus broke bay, then suddenly the barking ceased, and we heard a clear shout from the boys below, 'Iya kupuka, iya kuwe, iya kuwe, baas!' ('There, he's going up towards you, sir!')

"Well done, Nogwaja, my boy! you're a true prophet after all! We had a good view all along the krantz, and though there was some thickish bush in the gap upon the edge of which we stood, there would be no difficulty in getting a shot at anything, whichever way it ran out. Just in front of where we stood was a low krantz about 14 feet above a wide ledge which overhung the bush. The face of the krantz was slippery and water-worn, and we could not get down it, otherwise the ledge below would have been a capital place to stand, as enabling us to see under and into the bush in the gap. An 'msumbi ran out just after the boys shouted, and caused me to bring my rifle up as it darted through the bush; next moment it ran out below us not 20 yards distant, and I found myself wishing that it was the leopard. A few minutes afterwards I walked

a little nearer the edge to listen if I could hear anything in the gap, as we could not tell where the dogs or the leopard had got to. I heard a slight rustle below, whether in the bush or on the ledge I could not tell, and there was no time to find out, for with a rush and a bound the leopard threw himself against the kraantz, clutching at the grass-roots on top with the claws of one forepaw—the other was broken just above the wrist—and I could hear his hind-claws scraping on the rocks in his endeavours to scramble up. I knew that he was very close to me; his great blood-stained jaws were within 6 feet, and I could see his wicked yellow eyes glaring through the gap, and the saliva, red-stained, dripping from the gleaming fangs. As Ngwaja ran in with a wounded assagai, I fired down into the bush, and with a savage gasp he fell down on to the ledge below. The pocky Swazi, without waiting to see if he was dead, jumped down on top of him, and gave him a final thrust with his assagai ere life had sped."

It is very obvious that if the leopard's fore-arm had not been broken, Mr Kirby would have tasted in anticipation of the mauling which he was afterwards to receive in a night-combat with a wounded leopardess, when both his cartridges missed fire and his assagai broke as the brute and he came to close grips. Her teeth were fixed in his coat and shirt, her hot breath was near stifling him, and he was covered with blood from her mouth, as, with his last effort of consciousness, he drove the broken assagai three or four times deep into her chest. They were rolling together in a thick thorn-bush which prevented the leopardess from doing her worst, and Kirby's last recollection was the cruel pain when she fixed her teeth in his groin. When he came to himself in the darkness the leopardess was nowhere about, and he endeavoured to make for home, but fainting by the way, was found

by his boys, who had caught the alarm. The dead leopardess was discovered about 400 yards from the scene of action; and with "cold water, carbolic oil, and a good constitution," to say nothing of the advice of three or four Kafir doctors, Mr Kirby was about within a couple of months.

Numerous illustrations are given of the daring of the hill-leopard, and of the pluck with which he will charge his assailant. Two leopards haunted the kraals in their vicinity steadily for months, raiding them night after night, and carrying off goats and sheep and occasionally cattle. It was vain, however, to seek to lure them to "a kill" or to a tethered goat, and there were many disappointing hunts before they were brought to bag. One time when their spoor had been successfully followed up, their doom was postponed by Kirby's impatience. While he was waiting for his rifle, he strayed into a sort of hollow basin in the depths of the kloof, and there, lying among some large boulders, were the two leopards, one of them the largest and heaviest-looking animal of the hill type that Kirby had ever seen. He had no gun, and to advance or retreat was equally unsafe; but the leopards, after taking a good look at the intruder, dashed off, "giving vent to their displeasure in a succession of hoarse grunts of savage intensity." A shot was sent after them from an old Kafir gun, with no effect except upon the shooter, and it was a month before the leopards were again met with. They had killed a heifer belonging to Mgiyo's kraal, and Kirby spent the night by the half-eaten remains waiting for their return; but though he heard them in his vicinity, they did not come. Towards morning a stampede of cattle warned the watcher that the leopards were at

work, and Kirby came upon the leopardess and shot her. The enormous brute, after rolling over several times on the ground, was still able to make off, and it was not until after a long search that her dead body was discovered in her bush-lair. It was borne back to the kraal in high triumph, with waving of assegais and beating of shields in procession and solemn dance, to the tune of "The Evil Spirit is dead." The male, also a remarkably large animal, was some time after surrounded in a kloof, and slain by a shot from an ancient musket and many assegai thrusts, but not before he had killed three of the dogs.

Another time Kirby followed the spoor of two leopards into a gap in a kloof thickly set with thorn-creepers and scrub. Though he could not see them, he knew that they must be very close by, probably eyeing him all the while. And so they were, the pair of them, but they gave no sign; "they would not hasten a fight, neither would they refuse to be forced into it." He was about to ascend a large boulder to see if he could make them out, when low growls issuing from the thicket testified to their displeasure at his proceedings. Stooping down, he could just make out a leopard lying quarter-face to him, and fired. He fired again, through the smoke of the first shot, as a yellow object dashed past, and the leopardess was laid struggling on the sand within a few feet of the hunter; but the empty shells stuck in his rifle, and before he could extract them, and put in fresh cartridges, she had jumped off, and disappeared in the bush. He drove her out of her lair by throwing stones, and she plunged into a frightful kloof, so interlaced with thorny creepers that to penetrate it was impossible. Beating about

in his disappointment on the verge of the thicket, Kirby thought he saw something moving higher up above him, and climbed up on the lowest branch of an old tree to get a better view. Scarcely was he settled there when the wounded leopardess, with open snarling mouth, charged unexpectedly up the bank at him. It was an awkward position to fire in, and, wounded though she was, the brute took both barrels at close quarters before she fell. The leopard, however, managed to get off.

We have left ourselves no space to attempt a notice of Mr Kirby's chapters on lion-hunting, and it would be a difficult task to repeat at second-hand the exciting experiences which he relates with such spirit and graphic powers of description. He is no novice in this branch of sport, having slain his first lion as long ago as 1878, and he was lucky enough to come across a second one, and shoot it likewise, twelve days after the first. Since then his opportunities among lions have been frequent and his experiences eventful; and though he does not mention what his total bag has been, his score must occupy a high place upon the record, and the measurements of his skins are generally above the average.

On one memorable occasion, when spending the night in a hastily constructed thorn *scherm*, by a dead giraffe which a troop of lions roaming about the Simana kopjes had killed, Mr Kirby was visited by a detachment of them, ten in number, who prowled about quite close to his screen, some of them peering and sniffing at its occupant. Two lions and a lioness fell that night, and will it be believed that though the rest of the troop were in his immediate vicinity, and coming quite close to the *scherm*, Mr Kirby yielded to the

strain and exhaustion of the excitement, and dozed off to sleep in the midst of such dangerous neighbours! When he opened his eyes it was to behold three lions in front of him by the carcass, one of them a large black-maned lion, tempting a shot. It was too dark to sight, and Mr Kirby striking a blue-light fired; but he had been too hasty, and the shot failed. But for the sensational details of this eventful night, as well as for other thrilling adventures among the lions of the Magalakwini and the Malau, the reader must be referred to the author's own accounts.

Throughout all these stimulating pages, one of the greatest attractions is found in the pleasant sense of companionship with which the author inspires us, in the frankness with which he makes us the confidant of his feelings, and in the cheery and buoyant spirit with which he meets all his perils and emergencies. We have got, it seems to us, to know thoroughly both him and his surroundings: his native allies, the two clever huntsmen, Muntumuni and May, who might have been transplanted to South Africa out of the 'Last of the Mohicans'; the gallant steeds, Moscow, who would face a lion without flinching, and Ehlanzeni, who met with his death in a tussle with a lion near Sitiyana's kop; his hounds, the noble old Rover, Mahlatshwa, and plucky little Bushman, who are always getting mauled and torn in *mêlées*, yet ever eager for another fight; the chorus of Kafir "supers," who cross and recross the scene, head-men, hunters, warriors, and dancing-girls, that lighten up with their human lives the great solitudes of the bush, and provide an interlude in the drama of deadly war between man and beast. Not less agreeable are the

numerous sketches of wild scenery with which this volume is interspersed. Mr Kirby has an artist's eye and a poet's feeling—though, to be sure, his own recorded attempt at verse-making under difficulties does not seem wholly encouraging—and these endowments have entered largely into the making of his narrative the finished literary work which it has proved to be. As an instance of his skill in word-painting, the reader may turn to the description of an African thunderstorm (pp. 72, 73), which we should have given had we not already exceeded the fair limits of quotation. We should have liked, too, to say something of the admirable illustrations of Mr Whymper, in whom Mr Kirby has found a most fitting artistic *collaborateur*.

We cannot take leave, all too soon, of a book destined to rank as a standard work with the volumes of Gordon Cumming, Baker, and Selous on the shelves of every sportsman's library, more fittingly than in the words in which the author himself brings his adventures to a conclusion:—

"And now we have trekked out with our many trophies, leaving far behind us the long sandy ridges and the glorious acacia-groves, over and through which our gallant nags have carried us bravely; the arid dry grass-flats over which we urged our jaded spans; the deep, still pools, the calm, smoothly flowing rivers, the glorious moonlight nights, the clear, cool mornings, the glaring mid-day heat; and the wild free life of the hunting-veldt is over. But it cannot fade from our memories whilst life lasts, and therefore, friend, I must ever remain your debtor. But I can at least return you hearty thanks for your companionship throughout these joyous days, and trust you will believe that I am more than amply repaid if in the smallest degree I have contributed to your pleasure."

THE ANTI-MARRIAGE LEAGUE.

NOVELS have become, as everybody knows, a very large and rather important part of general literature in these days. The prominence of fiction has been much discussed, mourned over, condemned, and defended—it has been the despair of the high-minded educationist and those who believed that Free Libraries were to redeem the world. But, on the other hand, we have been comforted by many voices, telling us how Darwin deigned to read these works in his moments of leisure, and other great men, not perhaps so sublime, yet worthy of high consideration. What Darwin did, surely the students of Mile End or the milliners of Mayfair may do without loss of caste or damage to their powers of mind. It is in my recollection that much that was favourable was once said of novels. They were said not only to amuse but to improve the manners and conversation of the young, to acquaint them with the habits of the best society, and to prepare them by the study of various problems in imaginary life for the decision of corresponding problems (chiefly of a sentimental kind) in their own. This kind of applause had a tone of mental condescension which is—or was—general whenever the subject was discussed. And then the critic found out that they were to be most chiefly commended as pictures of their time, and that, for instance, he who would a hundred years hence study the Victorian age in the fullness of its mid-development could not do so better than in the novels, let us say, of Anthony Trollope, who was not a great humorist like Thackeray, or the much less

definable Dickens, nor a philosophic observer like George Eliot, but an admirable story-teller, seeing with very clear and lucid eyes the world and the ways that were around him. All these things were true, though perhaps it was not any of these excellent reasons for which novels were read. They were read, however, universally by great and small. They are read still, though for my own part I think less than formerly, in something of the same universal way. And in the training of the uneducated or half-educated classes they have a large share. One may be sure that, whatever their opinions or the view of human nature which they gave vent to might be, they did the great Darwin no harm; neither are they likely to affect the morals of Mr Arthur Balfour, who, I have been told, is also a great reader of novels. But there are a very great number of people of whom this certainty cannot be felt. And we have a standing lesson before us in the fiction of France to show the effect which a persistent statement of certain views has upon the public opinion of the world.

Not long ago, in one of the amusing articles with which the '*Figaro*' of Paris makes up for the absence of those political discussions and summaries which are what leading articles mean to us, there was given a conversation between a German and a Frenchman upon the supposed corruption of French society, and especially of the feminine part of it, which seemed to be the chief thing that every French novelist and romancer desires to impress upon his readers. Frenchmen don't hate Germans nowa-

days,—it is the English and the Italians whom they hate, a curious fact; and the Frenchman in this case was not angry with the German critic, and acknowledged the justice of the conclusion he drew; though he maintained, as a patriotic writer was bound to do, the injustice of supposing that French society was more vicious than any other society, because the novelists of France knew no subject to interest the public except those connected with breaches of the seventh commandment. I need not follow the argument of 'Figaro,' in the first place because I have forgotten it—and principally because it has nothing to do with what I wish to say. But we are now in presence of a similar misrepresentation, which threatens soon to produce almost as strong an impression as that which the French has succeeded in doing. It will be long, I hope, before English novels reach the same universal eminence of scandal as those of France. But yet there is too strong a current setting that way to be overlooked or neglected, and there is in the Scandal a still more oppressive element than in that of France. For in France the pure woman is still a being to be surrounded with every reverence and respect—whereas in the last new development of English fiction, that character has undergone a complete and extraordinary transformation, and it is the indulgence of passion, not the restraint of it, which is considered to be specially characteristic of purity. It is very likely that the original inspiration came from France, as our Art does now; but it has suffered a sea-change on its way. And though it is not by any means so universal, seeing it affects not more than one writer who has any remarkable claim to distinc-

tion, and one or two of second-class honours, it yet has collected so many of the smaller fry, and become so distinctly a fashion, that it seems to demand examination, and a question to the reader, not to the writers only. For when we ask, What do they mean by it? we must also ask, What does he mean by it? They (the writers) are individuals who may be moved, for anything we know, by various motives. There is the inherent love to shock which is motive enough for the young writer—and there is the more practical consciousness that it is profitable to shock, since to be shocked is a sensation, and therefore more or less agreeable. In the old days of semi-scientific exhibitions, what a delighted and terrified circle, rapturously apprehensive, was that which used to gather, taking hands, round the "battery" from which an electric shock was to be received. Not to take advantage of a weakness of this description is almost beyond the strength of human nature, longing for success, and finding it difficult to attain by more legitimate means. Besides, the writers are not above a score or so, all told; whereas the reader is a noun of multitude and passes definition. I should like to ask that many-headed person if he has the least notion what he is doing when he sends one of these books into what is called its twentieth edition? The guilt and the folly are nearly as much his as the writer's, and whereas it is he and not the writer who must chiefly suffer for it, it is with him that the question lies.

This inclination towards the treatment of subjects hitherto considered immoral or contrary to good manners, in the best sense of the word, is a position

to place what is called the Sex-question above all others as the theme of fiction—has gradually acquired the importance of a *parti pris*. It may be said that this question has always been the leading subject of romance; but this never in the sense of the words as now used. Love has been the subject of romance, and all the obstacles that have always come in its way, and the devotion and faithfulness of Lovers, the chosen Two, the perennial hero and heroine in whom the simpler ideals of life have been concentrated. What is now freely discussed as the physical part of the question, and treated as the most important, has hitherto been banished from the lips of decent people, and as much as possible from their thoughts; but is now freely given forth as the favourite subject for the chatter of girls, who no doubt in a great number of cases know nothing about what they are talking of, and therefore are more or less to be pardoned for following a hideous fashion which has the never-exhausted charm of shocking and startling everybody around. Indeed one of the things most conspicuous in this new method is the curious development of shameless Innocence, more dangerous than folly, more appalling almost than vice, because one does not know at any moment into what miserable quagmire its bold and ignorant feet may stumble.

This is what the Young Person, the thought of whom put a bridle on the jaws of Mr Hardy and Mr Grant Allen for a certain period of their career, has come to, under their enlightening labours. For a long time it was She who was supposed to be spared by the painful subjection under which

these accomplished writers declared themselves to be held for so many years in bondage. Now that they are emancipated She is emancipated too, and the great spectacle they have succeeded in setting before us is not even in the first place, what we may suppose them to have desired, the triumphs of their own genius—but the singular captive whom they have carried with them out of the battle, the most prized and precious of prisoners, the King's daughter, in whose safety the welfare of the race is concerned more than perhaps in that of any other hostage possible. At least this is what the alarmed spectator, always so timid and apt to fear the worst, is tempted to believe. I have the perfect conviction that it is not the Princess at all who is in their hands, but a false Duessa, always ready in all ages to trick herself in the garments of her mistress, and in reality only one Ignorance, a gipsy wench ever ready for mischief, who has bewildered the intelligence of all ages, and brought up a certain consistent breath of ill-fame from the very beginnings of the race, upon the Princess herself. The Red Cross Knight, it may be remembered, was himself taken in and woefully bewildered by this sham personage; but we have little doubt that Mr Hardy, and Mr Grant Allen, and Miss Ménie Muriel Dowie, and the other members of the band, believe that they have got the true.

I do not know, however, for what audience Mr Hardy intends his last work,¹ which has been introduced, as he tells us, for the last twelve months, into a number of decent houses in England and America, with the most shameful portions suppressed. How they

¹ *Jude the Obscure*. By Thomas Hardy. London: Osgood, M'Ilvaine, & Co. 1895.

could be suppressed in a book whose tendency throughout is so shameful I do not understand ; but it is to be hoped that the conductors and readers of 'Harper's Magazine' were so protected by ignorance as not to understand what the writer meant then—though he now states it with a plainness beyond mistake. I hesitate to confess that until the publication of Mr Hardy's last book, 'Tess,' I was one of those who had not been convinced of the extent of his power, or of the amount of real genius he possessed. The difference between that book and the former books from his hand was, it appeared to me, very great. It marked the moment of his supposed emancipation from prejudices of modesty which had previously held him (more or less, and sometimes rather less than more) from full enunciation of what was in him. And certainly the result of the *déborde-ment* was very remarkable. To demonstrate that a woman, twice fallen from the woman's code of honour and purity, was by that fact proved to be specially and aggressively pure, was a task for a Hercules, and Mr Hardy has no more succeeded in doing this than others have done before him ; but the rustic landscape, the balmy breathing of the cows, looming out of the haze in the mystery of the dawn—the rapture of the morning in the silent fields, the large figures of the men and women shaping out of the mist and dews—were things to call forth the enthusiasm of admiration with which indeed they were received. But I suppose Mr Hardy, like so many people, deceived by a simplicity which clings to genius, even when most self-conscious, was not aware what it was which procured him this fame, and ingenuously

believed it to be the worse part, the doctrine he preached, and the very hideous circumstances of guilt, unjustified even by passion, of his theme, and not these better things—which thus uplifted him suddenly to the skies.

This perhaps explains, or partially explains, the tremendous downfall of the present book, which, by following 'Tess,' accentuates its own grossness, indecency, and horror. Nothing, I think, but a theory could explain the wonderful want of perception which induces a man full of perceptions to make a mistake so fundamental ; but it is done—and thus unconsciously affords us the strangest illustration of what Art can come to when given over to the exposition of the unclean. The present writer does not pretend to a knowledge of the works of Zola, which perhaps she ought to have before presuming to say that nothing so coarsely indecent as the whole history of Jude in his relations with his wife Arabella has ever been put in English print—that is to say, from the hands of a Master. There may be books more disgusting, more impious as regards human nature, more foul in detail, in those dark corners where the amateurs of filth find garbage to their taste ; but not, we repeat, from any Master's hand. It is vain to tell us that there are scenes in Shakespeare himself which, if they were picked out for special attention, would be offensive to modesty. There is no need for picking out in the work now referred to. Its faults do not lie in mere suggestion, or any *double entendre*, though these are bad enough. In the history of Jude, the half-educated and by no means uninteresting hero in whose early self-training there is much that is admirable—Mr

Hardy has given us a chapter in what used to be called the conflict between vice and virtue. The young man, vaguely aspiring after education, learning, and a position among the scholars and students of the land, with a piteous ignorance of the difficulties before him, yet that conviction of being able to triumph over them, which, as we know, has often in real life succeeded in doing so—is really an attractive figure at his outset. He is virtuous by temperament, meaning no evil; bent upon doing more than well, and elevating himself to the level which appears to him the highest in life. But he falls into the hands of a woman so completely animal that it is at once too little and too much to call her vicious. She is a human pig, like the beast whom in a horrible scene she and her husband kill, quite without shame or consciousness of any occasion for shame, yet not even carried away by her senses or any overpowering impulse for their gratification, so much worse than the sow, that it is entirely on a calculation of profit that she puts forth her revolting spell. After the man has been subjugated, a process through which the reader is required to follow him closely (and Jude's own views on this subject are remarkable), he is made for the rest of his life into a puppet flung about between them by two women—the fleshly animal Arabella and the fantastic Susan, the one ready to gratify him in whatever circumstances they may meet, the other holding him on the tiptoe of expectation, with a pretended reserve which is almost more indecent still. In this curious dilemma the unfortunate Jude, who is always the puppet, always acted upon by the others, never altogether loses our esteem.

He is a very poor creature, but he would have liked much better to do well if they would have let him, and dies a virtuous victim of the eternal feminine, scarcely ever blamable, though always bearing both the misery and the shame.

We can with difficulty guess what is Mr Hardy's motive in portraying such a struggle. It can scarcely be said to be one of those attacks upon the institution of Marriage, which is the undisguised inspiration of some of the other books before us. It is marriage indeed which in the beginning works Jude's woe; and it is by marriage, or rather the marrying of himself and others, that his end is brought about. We rather think the author's object must be, having glorified women by the creation of Tess, to show after all what destructive and ruinous creatures they are, in general circumstances and in every development, whether brutal or refined. Arabella, the first—the pig-dealer's daughter, whose native qualities have been ripened by the experiences of a barmaid—is the Flesh, unmitigated by any touch of human feeling except that of merciless calculation as to what will be profitable for herself. She is the native product of the fields, the rustic woman, exuberant and overflowing with health, vanity, and appetite. The colloquy between her and her fellows in their disgusting work, after her first almost equally disgusting interview with Jude, is one of the most unutterable foulness—a shame to the language in which it is recorded and suggested; and the picture altogether of the country lasses at their outdoor work is more brutal in depravity than anything which the darkest slums could bring forth, as are the scenes in which their good ad-

vice is carried out. Is it possible that there are readers in England to whom this infamy can be palatable, and who, either in inadvertence or in wantonness, can *make it pay*? Mr Hardy informs us he has taken elaborate precautions to secure the double profit of the serial writer, by subduing his colours and diminishing his effects, in the presence of the less corrupt, so as to keep the perfection of filthiness for those who love it. It would be curious to compare in this unsavoury traffic how much of the sickening essence of his story Mr Hardy has thought his first public could stomach, and how many edifying details he has put in for the enlightenment of those who have no squeamish scruples to get over. The transaction is insulting to the public, with whom he trades the viler wares under another name, with all the suppressed passages restored, as old-book dealers say in their catalogues, recommending their ancient scandal to the amateurs of the unclean. It is not the first time Mr Hardy has adopted this expedient. If the English public supports him in it, it will be to the shame of every individual who thus confesses himself to like and accept what the author himself acknowledges to be unfit for the eyes—not of girls and young persons only, but of the ordinary reader,—the men and women who read the Magazines, the public whom we address in these pages. That the prophets should prophesy falsely is not the most important fact in national degradation: it is only when the people love to have it so that the climax is attained.

The other woman—who makes virtue vicious by keeping the physical facts of one relationship in life in constant prominence by

denying, as Arabella does by satisfying them, and even more skilfully and insistently than Arabella—the fantastic *raisonneuse*, Susan, completes the circle of the unclean. She marries to save herself from trouble; then quits her husband, to live a life of perpetual temptation and resistance with her lover; then marries, or professes to marry him, when her husband amiably divorces her without the reason he supposes himself to have; and then, when a selfish conscience is tardily awakened, returns to the husband, and ends in ostentatious acceptance of the conditions of matrimony at the moment when the unfortunate Jude, who has also been recaptured by the widowed Arabella, dies of his cruel misery. This woman we are required to accept as the type of high-toned purity. It is the women who are the active agents in all this unsavoury imbroglio: the story is carried on, and life is represented as carried on, entirely by their means. The men are passive, suffering, rather good than otherwise, victims of these and of fate. Not only do they never dominate, but they are quite incapable of holding their own against these remorseless ministers of destiny, these determined operators, managing all the machinery of life so as to secure their own way. This is one of the most curious developments of recent fiction. It is perhaps natural that it should be more or less the case in books written by women, to whom the mere facility of representing their own sex acts as a primary reason for giving them the chief place in the scene. But it has now still more markedly, though much less naturally, become the method with men, in the hands of many of whom women have returned to the *rôle* of the

temptress given to them by the old monkish sufferers of ancient times, who fled to the desert, like Anthony, to get free of them, but even there barely escaped with their lives from the seductions of the sirens, who were so audacious as to follow them to the very scene of the macerations and miseries into which the unhappy men plunged to escape from their toils. In the books of the younger men, it is now the woman who seduces—it is no longer the man.

This, however, is a consideration by the way. I have said that it is not clear what Mr Hardy's motive is in the history of Jude: but, on reconsideration, it becomes more clear that it is intended as an assault on the stronghold of marriage, which is now beleaguered on every side. The motto is, "The letter killeth"; and I presume this must refer to the fact of Jude's early and unwilling union to Arabella, and that the lesson the novelist would have us learn is, that if marriage were not exacted, and people were free to form connections as the spirit moves them, none of these complications would have occurred, and all would have been well. "There seemed to him, vaguely and dimly, something wrong in a social ritual which made necessary the cancelling of well-formed schemes involving years of thought and labour, of foregoing a man's one opportunity of showing himself superior to the lower animals, and of contributing his units of work to the general progress of his generation, because of a momentary surprise by a new and transitory instinct which had nothing in it of the nature of vice, and could be only at the most called weakness." This is the hero's own view of the circumstances which, in obedience to the code of honour prevalent in the

country-side, compelled his marriage. Suppose, however, that instead of upsetting the whole framework of society, Jude had shown himself superior to the lower animals by not yielding to that new and transitory influence, the same result could have been easily attained: and he might then have met and married Susan and lived happy ever after, without demanding a total overthrow of all existing laws and customs to prevent him from being unhappy. Had it been made possible for him to have visited Arabella as long as the new and transitory influence lasted, and then to have lived with Susan as long as she pleased to permit him to do so, which was the best that could happen were marriage abolished, how would that have altered the circumstances? When Susan changed her mind would he have been less unhappy? when Arabella claimed him again would he have been less weak?

Mr Hardy's solution of the great insoluble question of what is to be the fate of children in such circumstances brings this nauseous tragedy suddenly and at a stroke into the regions of pure farce—which is a surprise of the first quality, only too grotesque to be amusing. There are children, as a matter of course: a weird little imp, the son of Arabella, and two babies of Susan's. What is the point of the allegory which Mr Hardy intends us to read in the absurd little gnome, nicknamed Old Father Time, who is the offspring of the buxom country lass, is a secondary subject upon which we have no light: but it is by the means of this strange creature that the difficulty is settled. In a moment of dreadful poverty and depression, Susan informs her step-son, whom she loves and is very kind to, of the severe straits

in which she is. The child—he is now fourteen—asks whether himself and the others are not a great burden upon the parents who are already so poor; and she consents that life would be easier without them. The result is that when she comes in after a short absence she can find no trace of the children, until she perceives what seems to be, at first, suits of their clothes hanging against the wall, but discovers to be the children themselves, all hanged, and swinging from the clothes-pegs: the elder boy having first hanged them and then himself to relieve the parent's hands. Does Mr Hardy think this is really a good way of disposing of the unfortunate progeny of such connections? does he recommend it for general adoption? It is at least a clean and decisive cut of the knot, leaving no ragged ends; but then there is no natural provision in families of such a wise small child to get its progenitors out of trouble. I read, not long ago, a book in which a young lady of extreme loveliness and genius, to whom it had occurred to begin her life in an irregular manner, confessed to her lover, when fortunate fate brought him to her side after a long separation, by way of making a clean breast of all small peccadilloes before their reunion—that she had killed the baby. He thought no worse of her, and they lived happy ever after. It is no doubt startling at the first glance. But is this to be the way? Mr Hardy knows, no doubt as everybody does, that the children are a most serious part of the question of the abolition of marriage. Is this the way in which he considers it would be resolved best?

Mr Grant Allen is a very different person to reckon with. He

is not a man of genius, but a professor of literature, whose crow upon his hill-top, which is very like the lesser mount to which cock-crowing is habitual—is rather an outcry to burst the bosom of the gallant bird who makes it, than to arouse the world. We must, however, make haste to vindicate that gallant bird by acknowledging that his dunghill is constructed on the best sanitary principles, and that there is no nastiness, scarcely even an evil smell to it, which is a great recommendation in one way, though perhaps in another an additional danger. When the immaculate woman, who believes marriage to lie at the root of all evil, modestly and sweetly proposes to the second man who loves her that he should live with her, “on the terms on which I lived with Dolly's father,” the reader may be startled indeed, but there are no details to trouble him, and we are left in the position of philosophical observers examining the terms of a new engagement by which it is proposed to supplant the old arrangements of society and form new foundations for the world. Herminia, the pioneer of the new movement, is a character very well known in fiction: she is the sublimated schoolgirl of the romance dear to fanciful creatures of that description, the beautiful, brilliant, witty, and infinitely interesting maiden whose occult but irresistible influence was in old days the pivot upon which the world turned. In the group of “the Savage subdued by a Smile,” dear to Mrs Jarley and to our childhood, it was she who was the Smiler; in Lord Lytton's great novel she is the Woman who Inspires; we think, but scarcely venture to say, that she was in *Romola*, though wrapt in garments too magnificent for the part; and

she may be said with less irreverence to be the Dorothea of 'Midlemarch.' Unnecessary to add that first of all she was Corinne, and that now, if Mrs Humphry Ward will forgive us for saying so, we are called upon to surrender all our convictions to her eloquence and charm in Marcella. There is no girl of intelligence and imagination who has not planned a new incarnation of her, generally in the dreamer's own person. It is curious and interesting to find this wonderful, fluent, brilliant, uninstructed being, with all her strange half-childish theories held with the conviction of a martyr, invincible in the sense of being always right while the whole world lies in darkness—accepted by a man as the prophet and pioneer of a new Revolution in comparison with which all the other revolutions pale: but such is the case. Naturally she is the Gallia of Miss Dowie's book, but that was to be expected. The wonder is that, in all her crudeness, with her glib arguments and logic of three-and-twenty (that, I think, is her usual age: unless when she is eighteen, which the girl of my time preferred as the age of perfection in wisdom and insight as in other things), she should be taken up by any supposedly reasonable man as the leader of enlightened opinion, the Thinker before her age.

But it is part of the enlightenment of ours that the once glorious success which attended her wherever she moved is no longer inevitably hers as it used to be. We have all learned that a martyr is the best and most effectual originator of a new creed, as well as more poetical and interesting generally: therefore a martyr she has become, for the moment at least. The Savage is by no means certainly subdued by that ineffable

and heavenly smile. The world, instead of falling at her feet, rises up and slays her. This wicked and conventional race hisses her off the stage, instead of being convinced by the screeds of unanswerable argument which she pours forth upon it. But no superior girl at school will need to be informed that she has always the best of it in argument, and that, like a rougher hero of old, when her legs are smitten off, she still fights upon her stumps, and pours forth unanswerable logic to the very brink of the grave. This is the case with Herminia: she exits fighting: nothing ever convinces her, or shakes her unalterable confidence in herself. She will be right, let the world lie in ruins. Nothing moves her from her rock of conscious superiority and virtue, —everybody is wrong but she. Her opinions bring her sorrow and shame and destitution and poverty. That offspring of pure and unfettered love, which she hopes to train into another and more successful virgin redeemer of her sex, turns out an odious little minx, in contradiction of every instinct of her high-toned parents. But she never once asks herself for a moment whether perhaps there might be anything wrong in her own theory, and she walks out of the world at the triumphant height of certainty, as completely unmoved by anything that has taken place around her, unaffected by life and experience, untaught and inaccessible to every argument either of reason or circumstance, as if she had been made of wood and stone.

I am sorry to think that there is a certain truth to the facts of human nature as developed in women, in this unreasoning (though always reasoning) being. All of us who have any knowledge of our-

selves are aware, more or less, of this incapacity of judgment, this determination to stick to an opinion once adopted,—even, to confess the truth, to shut our ears to every argument which goes against that rigid and immovable thing, whatever it may be, which we have made up our minds is the Truth. Incapacity of judgment, however, is not so much the right description as refusal of the faculty of judgment and determination never to reconsider the subject. The foolish admire this tendency in themselves, and find fine names for it; the wiser, perhaps, understand and regret without being able always to overcome it even in their own persons. And the girl, in her enthusiasm for her own side, and hot indignation with the inferiority of her position, deifies the weakness into heroism. But it is very strange to see this self-willed visionary figure set up by a man as a pioneer of progress and the leader of a great revolution. I do not know whether I ought to congratulate Mr Grant Allen on his original treatment of this foolish, wrong-headed, unteachable incarnation of Youth, self-willed and autocratic in its ignorance, and presumptuous beyond all estimate—by carrying it on into middle age, and showing us how that confidence and self-will can be maintained in a foolish independence of all the teachings of fate.

This, however, is perhaps putting too fine a point upon it. It is more important to ask what is the result of the struggle of the woman who did, and of others who have followed her. Its result is to select, as the most important thing in existence, one small (though no doubt highly important) fact of life, which natural instinct has agreed, even among savages, to keep in the background, and which

among all peoples who have ceased to be savage is veiled over by instinctive reticences and modesties of convention as well as by the everlasting truth of Love, the highest inspiration of life, which is infinitely superior to every one of its manifestations, which comes before our birth, and lasts after our death, when we have neither beauty to tempt nor senses to satisfy. I do not choose to sully my lips with the name which the lesser passion thus selected bears, and it is painful to me, a woman, to refer to it; but it seems necessary to point out to the public what is the immediate result of the crusade against marriage now officially organised and raging around us. It is to displace love altogether, that faithful union of Two upon which pure and progressive society is built, which is expressed not in one action but in a hundred, which means the perfect fellowship of joy and sorrow, of interests and of hopes, of mutual help, support, and consolation, which is more certainly to be obtained in marriage than in any other connection or companionship on earth: and to place in its stead the mere fact which is its seal, one incident in life, but not more. To make this the supreme incident, always in the foreground, to be discussed by young men and women, and held up before boys and girls, and intruded upon those from whom circumstances or choice have shut it off, or who have outlived the period in which it is interesting, seems to me an outrage for which there is no justification. Love is never out of date, and its experiences are endless. The theory which confines it to one thing is a narrow, a degrading, and a false theory; it corrupts the morals, debases the conversation, and defiles the thoughts.

I think the public ought to

envisager the situation in which it is being placed with a seriousness which has not as yet been brought to the subject. Let us grant that a Shock is, in the general tameness of events, a thing which the idler classes welcome wherever it come from; and that the novelty which makes the critics gasp and gape is sure to attract a crowd desirous of a sensation, and eager to gasp and gape likewise. All these are mitigating circumstances to be taken into consideration. Yet there is something of much more importance beyond. Even though there could be supposed to be a good and pure motive in it, the result would still be miserable and terrible. It is well to be clean, but we do not prove our cleanliness by stepping into our bath in the sight of all the world—rather we prove something quite different. And those who should crowd to that spectacle, could it be set before the public, would not be serving the cause of cleanness, but of shamelessness, and extinction of every modest sentiment. The twenty editions of Mr Grant Allen are not a joke to be laughed at in society, but a shame to society, and a most dangerous precedent, as has been proved by many who have not even the share of literary talent which Mr Grant Allen possesses—but who are encouraged to believe that the Shock *quand même* is enough to sell the most trumpery of productions. I do not imagine, indeed, that the example of Herminia and Gallia is likely to be followed: indeed, in the former case at least, there is nothing to tempt even a hot-headed girl to essay a similar wreck and downfall; but the effect upon the general mind and conversation is disastrous. It

puts life out of focus altogether, and distorts hopelessly its magnitudes and its littlenesses. It fixes the thoughts upon one subject, and that the subject which has been proved to be the most damaging in the world as a subject for thought and for the exercise of the imagination. It makes the woman not the helpmeet of the man according to the noble and beautiful conception of that relationship in the first description of it ever given in literature—but his accomplice, as some one has said, in a certain act common to men and beasts, and no more sacred in one case than in the other from this point of view.

Amongst all the discussions in which these ladies indulge, either among themselves or with the astonished men who generally act the part of a startled audience, and, to do them justice, are never the originators of these sentiments, there is one argument, and only one, against the institution of marriage—the object of their repeated assaults—which can be considered seriously: and that is that marriage compels the existence or continuance of certain relations which, when not justified by love, are brutal. This absence of love, however, in their own particular cases, they do not consider by any means an absolute objection to the formation of at least temporary ties. For there is one thing, according to these new views, even more important than love in a woman's life, and that is, that she should become a mother—a development necessary to her full perfection: and to procure this, the formula of love, which, when dispensed with in marriage, makes that institution blasphemous, may be set aside in consideration of a still more imperative necessity.

"What good would you have done me by refusing me?" says Herminia. "Why force me to decline upon some other less meet for me?" Gallia, in like manner, having failed to secure the man she loves, naturally *does* fix upon another, whom she does not love, for the scientific reason that he is a fine man, healthy, and well-developed, and therefore well adapted to be the father of her children. Mr Hardy might have come in with advantage at this point to remind the theorist of the fact that these precautions are not always successful, seeing that his Arabella, the most full-blooded and robust of buxom women, produced a shrivelled little manikin instead of the lusty boy that might have been expected from her. Thus, however, that which is the only real objection which any one brings forward to the continuous bond of marriage is calmly set aside when it interferes with other purposes. It is this that makes of the permanent union an abominable thing. "If I love a man at all, I must love him on terms of perfect freedom. I can't bind myself down to live with him to my shame one day longer than I love him: or if I discover some other more fit to be loved by me," says the heroine; yet she calmly contemplates the necessity of falling back on some one else less fit if she does not get the man she prefers; so that in this respect she is no more sure of perfection than the poor woman who is married. But I do not intend to follow the wonderful argument—further, at least, than to remark how it has developed. A generation ago the argument against marriage—in those days put forth by the man generally with intention to deceive the trusting ignorance of a girl—was that it was an ungenerous bond to in-

sist upon, seeing that endless and ever faithful love required no such formality to secure its everlasting continuance. The new revolutionary has gone far beyond that. It is the continuance to which she objects. Faithfulness is bondage in her eyes. She is to be free to change her companion if she discovers another more fit to be loved. And if one, also another no doubt, and another. I must again remind the reader that these are the sentiments which his pleasure in a new sensation, or his perception of the extraordinary and monstrous joke, actually encourages and promotes, sowing them like seed among the fools, who are so plentiful, the silly, who know no better, and the weak.

Mr Grant Allen's second work, which he proclaims from the top of his mound with a still more ear-piercing crow, chiefly concerns the married woman whom a mysterious visitor attracts from the husband with whom she has been living peaceably enough, not having found that she had ceased to love him, &c., until the arrival of the other more fit to be loved forced the truth upon her. This new man, a more splendid specimen of humanity than any to be found in the present age, turns out to be an occult personage, and vanishes eventually in a blue flame (there is nothing said about a smell of sulphur). But in the meantime he has persuaded the mistress of the house in which he has been hospitably received that it is her duty and the only right thing to go away with him:—

"'Why should we two make any secret about our hearts any longer, Frida?' he said, solemnly. 'You don't love that man you call your husband. You haven't loved him for years. You never really loved him.'"

"She hung down her head and

hesitated slightly. 'Just at first,' she murmured, half inaudibly, 'I used to think I loved him. At any rate I was pleased and flattered he should marry me.'

"'Pleased and flattered,' Bertram exclaimed, more to himself than to her; 'great heavens, how incredible! Pleased and flattered by that man! One can hardly conceive it! But you've never loved him since, Frida. You can't look me in the face and tell me you love him.'

"'No, not since the first few months,' Frida answered, hanging her head. 'But, Bertram, he's my husband, and of course I must obey him.'

"'You must do nothing of the sort,' Bertram cried, authoritatively. 'You don't love him at all, and you must not pretend to. It's wrong; it's wicked. . . . The thing that's wrong is to stop with that man a minute longer than is necessary. It's a dishonour to yourself to spend one more day with him. If you don't love Monteith, it's your duty to him, and still more your duty to yourself and your unborn children, at once to leave him: if you *do* love me, it's your duty to me, and still more to yourself and our unborn children, at once to cleave to me.' . . .

"'Oh, Bertram,' she cried, with a tremor, 'it's good to be like you. I felt from the very first how infinitely you differed from the men about me. You seemed so much greater and higher and nobler. . . . But what about the children?' she asked, rather timidly.

"Bertram looked puzzled. 'Why, what about the children?' he repeated, in a curious way. 'What difference on earth could that make to the children?'

"'Can I bring them with me, I mean?' Frida asked, a little tremulous for the reply. 'I couldn't bear to leave them. Even for you, dear Bertram, I could never desert them.'

"Bertram gazed at her dismayed. 'Leave them!' he cried; 'why, Frida, of course you could never leave them. Do you mean to say anybody would be so utterly unnatural even in England as to separate a mother from her own children?'

"'I don't think Robert would let me keep them,' Frida faltered, with tears in her eyes; 'and if he didn't, the law of course would take his side against me.'

"'Of course!' Bertram answered, with grim sarcasm in his face. 'Of course! I might have guessed it. If there is an injustice or barbarity possible, I might have been sure the law of England would make haste to perpetuate it.'

And they go accordingly, the train of the children accompanying the errant mother—they go, I am sorry to say, to Hindhead, which, for some whimsical reason best known to themselves, the Anti-Marriage Brigade have chosen for their happy hunting-ground. They all go to Hindhead, which but a little while ago was the abode of Innocence and Science,—which is connected to myself with images of happy children and a tranquil quiet; but which seems unfortunately to have been selected now to give shelter to every erratic opinion and curious arrangement of domesticities. Mr Hardy has his own province all to himself; but the others all hasten to Surrey, and take possession of the pretty heathery hillsides, which are so pleasant, with their wide horizons and wholesome breezes. This, however, is only a protest by the way—and I hope has not distracted the attention of the reader from the amazing situation. It is clear that Mr Hardy's imp who hanged his little brothers was wanted here; but as he cannot always be in hand, there is no other thing to be done for them but to hang on to their mother's second honeymoon. Naturally they would hang on in increased numbers to her third and later honeymoons, so that Love would go on rolling like a snowball, ever a larger and a larger bulk, till it

might perhaps in time cure itself by involving too great a responsibility, even though a temporary one, upon the Disturber of household peace. In the meantime the husband certainly deserves a word of pity. Has he then no property in his children? must not even a share of them be his? We think even when he is as Mr Grant Allen thinks he ought to be, not a husband at all, but only Number One in the list of fathers, that the poor man ought to be gratified at least with a leg or an arm, after the fashion of Solomon. Decidedly the son of Jude is wanted in such an emergency: unless, indeed, we may hope that it might act in the interests of old-fashioned morality in the end, since a mingled crew of Smiths and Robinsons, and all the exigencies of the nursery, would be heavy luggage for a flying pair of lovers to carry about the world.

The woman is the being for whom emancipation is sought in all these performances; but I confess that it is the man who now, it seems to me, has the best right to the sympathies of the just and charitable. He it is who is now the suffering member; and he is generally a good and contented creature, satisfied with very little, almost too kind and compliant with the endless requirements of the woman who is never content whatever happens. My own sympathies were aroused for him, so far back as in the age of Madame Sarah Grand, when he was a sort of half-heroic and very gentlemanly sufferer. We have gone on with bounds since that mild day. I confess that I have a kindness still for Madame Sarah Grand. There is a certain sweep and largeness in her movements, as of the *ancien régime*; and a certain hot-headed bigotry and determination to see no view but her own, can

be more easily pardoned in a woman. But when we come to the *Judes of life* (if there are any such persons) flung about from one woman to another, and to such an unfortunate man as Robert Monteith, who, solely because he is not agreeable, and has failed to excite any passion in the bosom of his wife, is robbed with a high hand and the most contemptuous setting aside, as of a person whom there is no need to consider, of the children whom he has helped to bring into the world, and for whose comfort apparently he has provided ever since they were born,—the interest and the sympathy take a changed direction. He, indeed, if any one, might sing the woes of marriage. We need not enter into the ludicrous conclusion of this book by which the Tempter is spirited away, and the foolish wife is left—to drown herself, as we suppose: which is the pleasant conclusion of all these dilemmas.

However, it is not as a critic that I have wished at all to approach this question. The mass of sophistry contained in any one of the books mentioned is far too large in bulk and far too dull in form to afford even to a reviewer the sport which the public loves. Indeed it is one of the most amazing details of the matter that books full of elaborate dialogue and foolish argument, the crude theories and wild dogmatisms of the inexperienced and untrained, should have attained a kind of success, testified apparently by sale, and by sale only, but still a success though approved by no single authority—with the general public. It is, we are assured, chiefly by women that novels are read; and we know that the majority of women are still, notwithstanding Girton and the other colleges, quite untrained, and that

there is a large class among them more apt than any other class in the world to be dazzled by false philosophy, which enables them to believe that they are intellectual and above the level of the general. I suppose it is by their influence that Mr Grant Allen has attained his twentieth edition, and it is to them that his theories and those of his school are dangerous. The way has been prepared by that wild preaching of the wrongs of women which makes out every husband to be a tyrant. But he has reached his level now, poor man; he is no longer a tyrant—he is a poor creature upon the most insecure footing, whose belongings may be snapped up under his nose at any moment, wife and children swept away from him, his natural right even to the last, denied altogether, and himself hustled out of the way of the triumphant rival. Is this what the common opinion of ordinary people—who are the arbiters of the world—desires to see? So far as I am able, refusing to be drawn aside by the temptations of ridicule, this is what I wish to place before the reader. The object of these writers is no longer veiled over. It is plain and clear. Is it supposed to be a thing to be played with, laughed at, encouraged for the sake of conversation as a lively subject on which there is always something to be said? So far as this goes, its effect already has been most unmistakable. The conversation of the drawing-room is already most sensibly affected. Things are discussed freely and easily which it would a few years ago have been a shame to mention or to think of. Is this what we desire? Have we come really to the point of considering whether to kill off the children, or

to drag them about the world after their mother and her lover, or lovers, is the best means of providing for their welfare? and to decide that purity is best preserved by the transfer, upon any caprice, of the bond between men and women from one to another, instead of being held fast by that steadfast union of Two against all external cares and difficulties, which has hitherto been the foundation of society? If we have come so far as this, it is perhaps better that it should be fully recognised and understood. But if not, let us consider seriously what is the tendency of all this froth of literature: whether it is well to give it the force of a popular movement, and to afford our sanction, the sanction of the modest and the dutiful, to all the indecencies of a creed which puts foremost and prominent as the chief fact of life, for discussion and display, that which even the savage keeps more or less private to himself, and which the sacredness and mystery wherein the wonderful origins of life are instinctively shrouded, preserve alone from its natural resemblance to the traffic of the lower creation. We are not beasts but men. It may be sometimes that the beasts are better, more faithful and honest, than men; but yet to copy them cannot be an advantage to any higher development. Besides, they have a great advantage over us in the fact that their children are used for food, or otherwise naturally and simply disposed of without any responsibility on their part: which is a safeguard we have not yet come to, notwithstanding that Mr Hardy has certainly suggested a way.

M. O. W. O.

THE LESSON OF LOST OPPORTUNITIES.

THE history of politics, like that of human life, is a history of lost opportunities. The chance comes, and we never trouble ourselves to consider how soon it will go, or whether it will ever return. The present century has been peculiarly rich in illustrations of this truth—a truth of which we were opportunely reminded by Lord Salisbury in October last. "I have often reflected," he said, "what an excellent opportunity of settling the agricultural question was lost in 1846." At that time, thought the Marquis, it would have been comparatively easy to provide compensation for the loss of protective duties, had either side been disposed to consider the question dispassionately. Now, after the lapse of fifty years, the difficulty has assumed quite a different complexion, and the settlement of 1846, hasty and imperfect as it was, has been allowed to harden, till it offers an almost impenetrable surface to the shafts of criticism, however well directed they may be. It has occurred to us to bring together a few more instances of the same kind, with a view only to pointing a very obvious moral, but one nevertheless by which the operation of the party system often makes it difficult to profit. To Mr Balfour's remarks on party we shall revert presently. Our immediate object is to show the unfortunate results which have flowed from the wasted opportunities of strong Governments,—sometimes their own fault, sometimes the fault of external agencies with which even the strongest of them were powerless to cope.

The reader would scarcely thank us for taking him so far back as

1688, when an opportunity of providing some check on democratic precipitance, to compensate for the reduction of the Royal prerogative, is thought to have been lost; nor yet, perhaps, to the still greater opportunity, always regretted by Lord Beaconsfield, which was in 1828 lost by the Duke of Wellington and Sir Robert Peel, who had it then in their power to settle the Reform question without destroying the whole governing power of Government. Let us come at once to events nearer to our own times.

In 1846 men had still open minds on the subject of Free Trade and Protection: and the measures which Sir Robert Peel carried without any such alleviating provisions as common justice called for he certainly would have been none the less able to carry with these provisions superadded. Free Traders who down to the very eve of the disclosure had expected nothing, would certainly have been satisfied with something very much less than the Government actually proposed. Compensation of some kind would have been regarded by the majority at that time as only the natural price of the boon about to be conceded to them; and with proper management the Protectionists might have been induced to acquiesce in it, and the rupture of the party have been prevented. Had any one put it to the public at that time, that the total abolition of the Corn Laws should be accompanied by the remission of all those exclusive burdens upon land which had been imposed since 1815, we doubt if a word would have been raised against it. But without

going into particulars or specifying exactly what course should have been pursued, we think it is self-evident that such an adjustment of conflicting interests might then have been effected, as would have averted some of the worst results for which unrestricted competition is responsible. Here, then, was another lost opportunity, occasioned perhaps by causes not wholly dissimilar from those to which we owe the next, the chance thrown away in 1870. Sir Robert Peel and his colleagues who agreed with him had got Free Trade upon the brain. They rushed into it with all the proverbial impetuosity of converts: safeguards, equipoises, mitigations, the consideration due to a great national interest suddenly and abruptly robbed of the fiscal support on which it had been taught to rely, and in reliance on which a vast capital had been invested—all such ideas were whistled down the wind, as interfering with the symmetry and completeness of the new policy; and an unworthy concession to a privileged class forsooth! The abolition of the Corn Laws was rushed through Parliament under the influence of these feelings: and now we are experiencing the consequences.

The above was the third of our lost opportunities. The fourth is one which was also referred to by Lord Salisbury in his reply to the deputation headed by the two Archbishops and the Duke of Devonshire on the subject of Voluntary Schools. Our present difficulties had arisen, he said, from the opportunity which was lost in 1870 of settling the question in such distinct terms as could not afterwards have been misrepresented or evaded. Mr Forster's Act was passed, he said, "in a moment of enthusiasm and panic."

This was exactly what happened with the Corn Laws. The secularists jumped at a scheme which gave them so much more than they had ever ventured to hope for, while the Church party were afraid that if they rejected this they would only get something worse; so that both combined to get it through Parliament without any thought of the future, or of what might happen if the "general understanding" on which it was passed was not strictly observed. The Church party had no security beyond the verbal assurance of Mr Forster, which soon turned out to be worthless. But had the position been rightly understood, or the Church party been under better generalship, they might have exacted conditions which would have restrained the board-school party from such gross violations of the spirit of the Act as they have recently been guilty of. "The religious difficulty was very strongly felt [*i.e.*, 1870]. But the answer was that there were voluntary schools besides the board schools, and that parents who did not like the education in the board schools would always have that resource. As long as the board schools did not act as an agency for exterminating the voluntary schools, that answer was perfect and complete." But this answer, Lord Salisbury went on to say, lost all its force as soon as it became the evident intention of the board-school party to use the powers created by the Act for the purpose not of supplementing but of supplanting voluntary schools. This contingency ought to have been foreseen and provided against a quarter of a century ago, when the whole subject was fresh, and legislation was still ductile. But now, as we said of free trade, the system has been allowed to harden.

"A kind of defence of it has sprung up." Any one who offers to touch it is accused of "reopening" the question, or "departing from the Act," and so forth, all of which are plausible cries, and greatly increase the difficulties of reform. The moral is, however, that if it is wrong to reopen a question, statesmen should be very careful how they close it, and should not consign any measure to the region of finality till every loophole has been stopped by which those who would fain evade its real meaning may effect their purpose.

It should be needless to add that those who have reopened the education question, and departed from the Act of 1870, are *not* the Church party. That Act was framed on the theory—a theory fully borne out by the inspectors' reports—that voluntary schools were performing the work of education in a satisfactory manner, and were not to be placed at any disadvantage by the establishment of board schools. Is it those who support, or those who transgress this understanding, who are departing from the Act? The Act prescribes the teaching of Christianity in board schools. Are those reopening the question who contend that Christianity can only be taught by Christians, or those who maintain that it can be taught just as well by teachers who do not believe in it? "Art thou he that troubleth Israel?" said the apostate king; and the prophet answered, "I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord." Those are departing from the Act, and reopening the question, who seek to subvert the basis on which it originally rested. If Christianity is not to be taught in the board schools, as Mr Forster

contended it should be, and as the whole House of Commons understood that it would be, the voluntary schools come at once into a new position: are called on to supply the want, and must be provided with the means of doing so. They have stronger claims on us than ever.

What is wanted now is an Education Act Amendment Act, reaffirming in formal and explicit terms what was unfortunately left to depend upon "a general understanding." What are known as general understandings sometimes work well when the good faith of all parties concerned can be fully relied upon, and when through long custom they have become the ordinary channel by which business transactions are conducted. But between two political antagonists who are fighting to the bitter end, no such arrangement is ever likely to be satisfactory. By one or the other it is sure to be abused; and when in such a case any agreement or any compromise is arrived at, it must be put down in black and white, and in terms which no ingenuity can distort. We have had quite enough of "general understandings" in more departments of public affairs than one. Lord Salisbury has as good an opportunity now of removing this question beyond the reach of controversy as can be expected to recur. Only let him beware of doles and sops. These would leave the root of the trouble untouched, and purchase only a temporary lull, even if it did that, at the cost of fresh embarrassments in the future, when perhaps the Conservative party might be in a worse position for dealing with them than they are now. *This opportunity assuredly must not be wasted.*

In his very interesting, though not always strictly accurate, *Life*

of Lord Beaconsfield,' Mr Froude numbers the Ministry of 1874 among the wasted opportunities of the century. Lord Beaconsfield, with his majority of fifty, was perhaps quite strong enough to have undertaken and carried through those large measures which Mr Froude thinks he certainly would have done had he been twenty years younger. He might, he says, have settled Ireland and have reconstructed our colonial empire. This was the opportunity which he wasted. There are, however, two sides to this question. Mr Froude forgets that Mr Disraeli came into power pledged to deal with certain domestic questions, and that he redeemed his pledges. At the same time, it may perhaps be granted that he really had an opportunity of doing more than he did, and that he perhaps relied too much on a longer tenure of office than he actually enjoyed. It must be remembered, however, that at that time the public were supposed to be weary of the grand style. "Blazing questions" and "heroic legislation" had become terms of contempt. Mr Disraeli may have thought that at all events he would give the country a little respite from this kind of excitement. But whether we agree with Mr Froude or not in thinking that another great opportunity was lost in 1874, our parliamentary history down to that time affords sufficient illustrations of the danger for our present purpose.

That 1896 will not add another to our list of lost chances, we have every reason to believe. Lord Salisbury is a man of strong convictions and not to be frightened at shadows, as he abundantly proved during his former administration. The Duke of Devonshire is almost under a pledge to see that the

work of domestic improvement goes steadily forward. In Mr Balfour we have a young and energetic statesman on whom we may confidently rely. And Mr Chamberlain, we may be quite sure, will not let the grass grow under his feet. We may trust the intentions of the Government to make the most of the present opportunity; and what augurs well for a successful innings, is that they seem perfectly alive to the impolicy of attempting too much. The only question is whether they can rely on the patience of their supporters to give them space and room enough to do their work thoroughly. If they allow themselves to be driven from their present resolution into wide miscellaneous legislation, they will drift into that worst of all systems, the system of patching up, which always carries discredit in its train.

Lord Salisbury's is the strongest Government that has existed since 1869, not merely by reason of the largeness of his majority in the House of Commons—for a majority of a hundred is as good for all practical purposes as a hundred and fifty—but because of its moral effect as showing how deeply the nation has been stirred. His supremacy is not, any more than the Duke of Wellington's, to be accounted for by the "swing of the pendulum" only, a metaphor which has found more favour than it perhaps deserves in political circles. He has a moral power at his back greater than Mr Disraeli had in 1874; greater than Mr Gladstone had either in 1880 or 1885; and greater than Lord Salisbury himself had in 1886, when his majority turned on one question only. Even Mr Gladstone's majority in 1869 was after all a party majority. There was a large and compact body of

the English electorate arrayed against it, animated by a common principle, led by a great leader, and though beaten not discredited. This is certainly no accurate account of the present Opposition. Lord Salisbury therefore starts on his career with longer odds in his favour than any Minister has had since 1828. But, on the other hand, he has difficulties to contend with which had not arisen seventy years ago to perplex Ministries and neutralise their best-laid schemes; while he has also some questions before him which scarcely admit of any permanent settlement, and disorders which can only be dealt with by alleviation of the symptoms. Now which are the questions which it is in the power of the Government to settle, and which are those admitting only of treatment confessedly inadequate to work a final or immediate cure? Two of the most important among them belong unhappily to the latter class—namely, the condition of agriculture, and the condition of Ireland.

The agricultural question is one which no patriot can contemplate without dismay approaching to despair. The latest information that we have regarding the intentions of the Government is contained in Mr Long's speech at Sudbury on the 4th of last month. There is to be, we are told, a readjustment of local taxation, an increase of facilities for the transport of farm produce, and a system of light railways for the accommodation of districts lying apart from the great thoroughfares. We shall reserve our judgment on these various proposals till we see the bills in which they are embodied. But we have heard so much during the last quarter of a century of the great things to be expected from the "readjustment of local taxation,"

while all that the mountain has as yet brought forth is such a very small mouse, that we find it difficult to repress a growing tendency to scepticism whenever we see these cabalistic words repeated by a Minister of the Crown. It is quite true that the value of landed property has declined, that the value of personal has increased, and that, nevertheless, personal property bears a much smaller share of both local and imperial taxation than landed property. But this is no new thing. If any cure for this admitted injustice is possible, why was it not applied sooner? The difficulty is one with which Mr Goschen more than twenty years ago confessed himself unable to cope; and we are rather doubtful whether the scheme now proposed by the Associated Chambers of Agriculture has much chance of being adopted:—

"That land devoted to agriculture shall be assessed to local rates at one-fourth of its annual value. That the Land Tax and Inhabited House Duty levied in their respective districts be handed over to the local authorities, to be applied towards the deficiency caused by sub-section (a); that so much of the deficiency in the rates as is caused by the reduction in the assessment of agricultural land, and is not supplied by the duties transferred under (b), shall be borne by grants from the Imperial Exchequer, subject to such conditions as to efficiency and economy as may be necessary; that any additional imperial taxation rendered necessary by the above adjustment be levied on personal property."

Yes: but how? This has always been the difficulty. Facilities of locomotion will, of course, be very welcome. But what we specially recommend to the public are the concluding remarks of the President of the Board of Agriculture, in which he advises those

busybodies who are always telling the farmers what they ought to do, to mind their own business. This is aimed, we suppose, at all the wild suggestions which have been made lately about fruit and vegetable growing, poultry-farming, and bee-keeping. Such things as these may be useful ancillaries, but they never can supply the place of wheat and barley. Why, in many parts of England labourers decline even allotments specially intended for the growth of vegetables, because wheat and barley have ceased to be remunerative. "If farmers went into manufactories and told the proprietors that they ought to do this, that, and the other, they would soon be told to mind their own business; and yet people from the manufacturing districts were the would-be advisers of the farmer, and were the first to tell him that he did not know what he was about." We are to conclude from Mr Long's words that the Government are superior to this kind of nonsense, and that, whether they are able to help the farmer much or little, they will not expect him to retrieve his fallen fortunes by eggs, apples, and cabbages.

Further measures for the assistance of British agriculture have been pressed upon the Government, one of which may possibly be adopted, though not one on which the farming interest is unanimous—we mean an Act of Parliament forbidding altogether the importation of live meat. Mr Long seemed inclined to favour this proposal; but it would fall very hardly on the fatteners of stock, and would probably lead to protracted opposition in the House of Commons. Another suggestion is for the benefit of barley-growers,—barley being one of the

sheet-anchors of agriculture at the present time. Lord Winchilsea, representing the National Agricultural Union, presses for a reduction of the duty on beer made of British barley from 6s. 9d. a barrel to 5s. 9d., and a proportionate increase of the duty on beer made from foreign barley. This would be no hardship on the consumer. But the practical difficulty of distinguishing between the two kinds of beer is, the Chancellor of the Exchequer seems to think, almost insuperable.

An Irish Land Bill will of course have to be introduced next session. But Lord Salisbury's chance of contributing to the regeneration of Ireland lies rather in the general policy of the Unionist party than in any particular measures. Respect for law and order, for the rights of property, for the freedom of individuals, are the only cure for the Irish disease; and it would gradually begin to take effect if the Unionist system only had fair play. The great want of Ireland is simply firm government, and protection for the peasantry who are willing to live as good citizens under the exceptionally favourable conditions which Great Britain has conceded to them. The great majority of them would be no better off under Home Rule; and they know it. They might be much worse off; and they know it: and though we are aware that Irish ideas are peculiar, and that to fancy themselves ill-used, and always to be yearning for something, they hardly know what, is almost a necessity of their existence—yet there are limits to an Irishman's imagination after all, and he would hardly jeopardise all his present comforts only to make Tim Healy King of Ireland. If he could only be delivered from

the yoke of the organisation which makes him throw up his cap for things to which he is perfectly indifferent, the Irish question would be solved. But that must be a work of time. And the disheartening feature in the prospect is, that the British electorate may, out of sheer wantonness, interrupt it in the middle by returning another Government to power who will forthwith destroy all that the Unionists have accomplished, and leave the whole work to be done over again when they in their turn shall be expelled from office. Of course this seesaw cannot go on for ever, and can only end in some violent catastrophe, unless the British people make up their minds to keep the Unionists in power till the Irish question is really settled, and Home Rule dead, buried, and forgotten.

But if it is not within the power of any Ministry to effect all at once the regeneration of agriculture and the pacification of Ireland, there are other questions of which the permanent settlement is not beyond the reach of Lord Salisbury and his colleagues. We will name four: the Education question, the Labour question, the Municipal question, and the Poor Law. We believe it is within the power of the present Ministry to amend the laws relating to all four in a manner which shall silence agitation, for at least another generation; but only upon certain conditions, the fulfilment of which we own we cannot look forward to in any very sanguine spirit. Of course there will be the usual meetings in Trafalgar Square and Hyde Park; but we mean by agitation a clamour kept up in the press and in Parliament by men of education, and by the more ambitious class of artisans in their own respective spheres. Will the present Government, with

so much in its favour, be able to secure, for some appreciable period of time, the cessation of *this* species of agitation? If "the good sense of the English people" deserves what was said of it by a contemporary this time last year, such a consummation ought not to be impossible.

Lord Salisbury has explained clearly and concisely his own views on the Education question. It seems to him that the great body of Nonconformists get their own religion taught in the board schools; and if they get their religious teaching at the expense of the public, why not other religious communions also? His idea, therefore, is that denominational schools should be established wherever the population is sufficient to support them. This would of course involve some additional Imperial expenditure, and must depend on the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who, as Lord Salisbury says, is the lion in the path. But he thinks it would be less than is perhaps apprehended; while we may at once correct a mistake into which the Duke of Devonshire, and many other persons too, have naturally fallen, and that is, that as grants to voluntary schools increase, subscriptions diminish. This is not the fact. The number of children in voluntary schools has recently increased to such an extent that the amount per head derivable from subscriptions is slightly lower than it was; but the subscriptions themselves are larger, not smaller, than they were. We have reason to suppose that the 17s. 6d. limit will be abolished, and that school-board expenditure, which is now absolutely uncontrolled, will be placed under some proper supervision.

We can do no more in this article

than indicate the salient points which the Government may be expected to touch. The two deputations which have recently been received by Sir Matthew White Ridley have only elicited from the Home Secretary that in the new Employers Liability Bill, which the Government intend to introduce, the principle of contracting-out will certainly be maintained. And this, after all, is chiefly what we want to know. The Mutual Insurance Societies will be carefully protected, the Government believing that nothing is better calculated to promote good and friendly feelings between employers and employed, which, as Sir Matthew very justly adds, lies at the root, and must always lie at the root, of our industrial prosperity. It is quite true that the working classes are divided in opinion on this subject. But they are very evenly divided; and in that case, according to all recognised principles of equity, the less coercive course, the one that interferes least with the freedom and independence of the working man, is clearly the one to be adopted. When nearly, if not quite, half of the whole body—at all events a very substantial minority—object to put their necks under the yoke, it is clearly the duty of the Government to see that they are not compelled. The strike in the shipbuilding trade has suggested to the Government the creation of boards of arbitration. But we can hardly share Mr Long's confidence in the power of public opinion alone to enforce their judgments. This is another branch of the labour question which, taken as a whole, is equal in importance to any other with which the Government is called upon to deal, and one of which a really satisfactory and permanent

settlement will entitle them to our lasting gratitude.

The reconstruction of the English Municipal system is a question which certainly ought to be taken up by the Government. London is far too large to be governed by the present County Council. The metropolis requires to be broken up into at least half-a-dozen municipalities, if the principle of local self-government is to be really carried out. Lord Salisbury is in favour of such a change. The London Municipal Society is steadily working for it. London public opinion decidedly supports it; and in fact several of the Unionist victories in London at the last general election turned upon it. Of the measures which are confidently expected from the Government, a County Government Act Amendment Act, at all events for the metropolis, stands in the first class.

Last, but not least, we come to the Poor Law, and the great conflict between the severer disciples of political economy and those whom they designate as socialists. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has declared himself in favour of a classification of workhouses, by which a distinction should be drawn between two classes of paupers. Mr Chamberlain is the representative in the Cabinet of old-age pensions. That between the two some attempt will be made to solve one of the most perplexing problems of modern civilisation we may reasonably anticipate. In our own opinion the time is quite ripe for a reconsideration of the whole subject. The new Poor Law, passed in 1835, has lasted sixty years, during which time enormous changes have taken place in the conditions of British labour, and innumerable fresh laws have been

enacted to grapple with them. The Poor Law alone has been left practically untouched, and it would be surprising if it did not require some alterations by this time. We must of course be extremely cautious, lest what we do with the one hand we undo with the other. It is one of the leading features of Conservative reform that it aims at preserving and stimulating the energy, self-respect, and self-reliance of individuals. This is the principle on which the Government will defend the right of "contracting-out" in the Employers Liability Bill. And this principle must be steadily kept in view when we come to the reform of the Poor Law. We have, however, to be equally on our guard against professional pedantry—the pedantry which supposes that all economic laws must necessarily be of universal application, and that there are no social diseases or disorders which require the suspension of rules and maxims suitable only to perfect social health. Is the social condition of Britain at this moment thoroughly healthy? Is it possible that it should be? With our overgrown and increasing population, our keen competitions, and the certainty that thousands must be trodden down in the struggle for existence now where a hundred would have fallen only a century ago, can we expect to be free from the necessity of suspending laws or giving up habits and traditions suitable only to simpler and more natural conditions? An ancient and highly complex civilisation is liable to disorders analogous to those which visit the human frame in advancing years. This seems too often to be forgotten. We are assured that nothing is required to prevent these disorders as they affect the labouring class but the strict en-

forcement of economic doctrines, and that to relax them in the slightest degree is only to alleviate local distress at the cost of national degeneration—is, in fact, to perpetuate and aggravate the very evils it is designed to counteract. We do not say that there is nothing in this argument. We know that here and there those who insist on it have waged a successful war with pauperism, and have driven it out of the field. But these exceptional cases seem only to prove that what may be done in particular parishes or districts by men of more than average skill, resolution, and assiduity, cannot be done generally by the average administrator; or why is it not? Why is not a system so eminently desirable in itself more frequently attempted or carried out?

That the Government will have plenty of difficulties to contend with in every one of these questions, and will find powerful bodies opposed to them, not merely from a party point of view, but on principle, requires no demonstration. But now is their opportunity; they will never have a better. And may we not be permitted to hope that really honest, comprehensive, and well-matured plans for adjusting the rival claims of labour and capital, of secular and religious education, of political economy and unmerited adversity, and of central and local self-government, will encounter only fair and legitimate opposition, and ultimately be allowed to terminate the respective controversies to which they relate, for at least another quarter of a century?

It will be remembered, however, that we have spoken of certain conditions as essential to the success of the Government in the work which is specially required of them; and we have expressed

ourselves as by no means certain that these conditions will be realised. The first is some change in the manners of the House of Commons, and in the popular conception of the rights and duties of parliamentary parties. It will be useless for the Government to devote themselves to the preparation of measures which shall have the effect we have described, if the modern system of party warfare is to be continued. It is useless to calculate on the permanence of the best possible legislation if there is a party in the country determined to pick it to pieces, whatever it may be, and to refuse to allow any measure to be final unless it has been carried by themselves. When there is a numerous body of professional politicians in the country who live by agitation, and with whom it is an end in itself; when there is a party in Parliament who refuse to accept the verdict of the nation, however decisively pronounced, or to sit quiet under defeat, as was formerly the habit of parties, and wait for better days; when no Conservative Government can expect the slightest assistance from the Opposition, whose sole desire is that Ministers shall do as little as possible; when questions only just closed are ripped up again directly, to afford fresh fuel for the flames,—it is evident that parliamentary legislators must discard the word final from their vocabulary, even in its most limited and least natural sense. Yet who shall say that this is not a fair description of what Lord Salisbury would have to expect both inside and outside the House of Commons if the strife of parties is to be conducted as it recently has been? The Prime Minister in one of his autumnal speeches referred to the doctrine of divine right, which, laid aside

by kings, has been taken up by Liberals, who evidently believe, or wish others to believe, that they are the only legitimate and hereditary rulers of the British empire. The consequence of this belief is that they consider it monstrous and absurd for Conservatives to claim any consideration or forbearance from the rightful heirs whom they have for a time dispossessed of their birthright. They therefore hold themselves at perfect liberty to practise against their opponents tactics which, if used against themselves, would be factious, vexatious, disloyal, unconstitutional, and a hundred other things besides. Now this was not the attitude of the old leaders of the Liberal party—of men like Lord John Russell, or Lord Palmerston, or Lord Althorpe. They did not consider it their primary duty to harass and impede the Government. They did not consider that they and they alone had a right to the Treasury Bench. This article of faith, we are afraid we must say, came in with Mr Gladstone after 1874. The doctrine of divine right soon, and very soon, becomes in practice the doctrine of power at any price; and this same doctrine is the trouble ahead of Lord Salisbury. If the Liberals act up to it in the future, the Government will never be let alone. Nothing that they can offer to the public will be deemed satisfactory or sincere. Every measure they pass will be only an “instalment,” a feeble and imperfect conception, to be developed hereafter by their opponents; or else an artfully devised scheme of reaction, veiled under specious pleas of liberty, equality, or justice. This is the line of action to which this principle of divine right must necessarily lead the Liberal party. We have expressed a hope that the present leaders of that party in the

House of Commons may think better of it, and recur to the methods practised by their distinguished predecessors. It is clear that on their doing so hangs the future of parliamentary government. If they do not make the change now, when everything seems to point to its propriety, they never will. They have complained of the Conservatives for what they call "re-opening" the Education question. But even if it had been the Conservatives who had reopened it—which it wasn't—Mr Forster's Act was allowed to settle the question for a quarter of a century. No such arrangements can of course be absolutely final. If they remain in force, and satisfy the wants of the country from twenty to forty years, it is all that we can expect; and that much we have a right to expect from Lord Salisbury's legislation, if it is fairly accepted according to the general understanding on which party government was till recently conducted.

Whether this general understanding has much chance of being revived, we may judge from Sir William Harcourt's letter to Mr Haslam, published about a month ago, on the subject of voluntary schools. It is full of these fine broad plausibilities in which Sir William Harcourt delights—broad enough to cover such a tissue of malicious sophistry as betrays pretty clearly what we have to expect from him when Parliament meets. He declares that the Bishop of London, while allowing that the education given in board schools is inferior to that given in voluntary schools, desires to drag down the former to the level of the latter,—the Government meaning to do the same. The Bishop allowed nothing of the kind. But even if he had

done so, the inferiority would be simply the result of the injustice with which the voluntary schools have been treated, and for which Sir William Harcourt's own followers are responsible. Sir William knocks them down and kicks them for falling, and when they try to get up again calls them narrow-minded. Sir William is as "weel gifted wi' words" as Mr Blattergowl in the 'Antiquary.' But no words can help him out of such a pit as he has dug for himself in this letter.

Mr Balfour has recently spoken on the subject of party government, and his remarks bear so directly on the possibilities we have been considering, that we shall devote the remainder of our article to consideration of them. Mr Balfour says that government in this country is government by public opinion, and that government by public opinion is necessarily government by party. The only alternatives, he says, are government by a bureaucracy, or by a monarch exercising functions very different from those which are exercised by the sovereigns of Great Britain. It is only in one of these three ways that continuity of policy can be maintained, continuity of internal policy, and still more continuity of foreign policy. We might ask ourselves, however, whether this continuity of policy *has* been preserved in this country, and whether the want of it is not what we are perpetually deploring? Has not the party system, of late years at all events, entirely failed to secure this great boon for us? We do not question the correctness of Mr Balfour's general statement. Public opinion can hardly be brought to bear on the Government unless it is organised and disciplined, which means, of course, the existence of two opposite

camps. We agree also that the only alternatives are those which he suggests. But the question is, whether we have *got* the genuine party system in operation among us at the present day, or only a debased and vicious corruption of it. As our readers may gather from what we have already written, our own opinion is that we have not, and that if we had, Lord Salisbury would be in no danger of the kind of opposition we have described. If the deviation from the original type had been a matter of yesterday, and seemed likely to correct itself to-morrow, it would have been scarcely necessary to refer to Mr Balfour's speech; but unhappily this is not the case. We have already travelled a long way from the regular road, and have been some years upon the journey. There seems some danger that the new methods may gradually supplant the old, and succeed in effecting a permanent lodgment in our political system.

"Our one hope," says Mr Balfour, "for continuous, steady administration lay in the fact that the political forces of the country divided themselves naturally into two camps, animated by loyalty to their respective leaders, not breaking themselves up into groups, ready to destroy at a moment's notice and in the most unexpected manner apparently the strongest Ministry, but organised in the country and organised in the House of Commons, and prepared to give that steady and continuous support without which the strongest Government, call it by what name they liked, Unionist, Radical, Liberal, Conservative—give it what name they liked—was absolutely impossible. The political instincts of the Anglo-Saxon race had given us that party organisation."

But can we honestly say that such is the condition of English

parties at the present moment? No doubt the political forces of this country do "divide themselves naturally into two camps." But our contention is that they have lately been broken up by divisions which are not natural,—the result being that instead of such a party as Mr Balfour describes, we saw in the last Parliament a collection of heterogeneous groups, over which the leader of the House exercised little real authority, and who could never be prevented from acting on the same system in Opposition, however much he might disapprove of it or deprecate it. The old party regimen, as it flourished in this country for a century and a half, meant the division of "political forces" into two camps, opposed to each other on certain great principles of Government, which were all they cared for. They did not make a battlefield of every little administrative detail which the Government were engaged upon—Beer Bills, Coal Bills, Road Bills, Dog Bills, and what not. They left these things to the Executive, and only drew their swords in earnest when their constitutional creed was threatened. Then the country was easily governed by the same political connection for long terms of years, and "continuity of policy" was the natural result. It has been said, and perhaps truly, that Mr Pitt was prepared to make a break in it as regards Foreign Affairs when he was prevented by the French Revolution. But whether he was or not, none occurred, and our old Continental friends remained down to the middle of the century what they had been since 1688. Whether the system was good or bad is beside the mark. There was continuity; and we are quite sure that Mr Balfour would be the first to allow that our

foreign relations are not on this footing at the present moment.

It is not perhaps easy to determine how far the older scheme of party, which worked so admirably down to our own times, is suited to an age of more widely diffused social intelligence, conscious of new wants and aspirations, and daily developing new political activities, necessarily competing with the established agencies in the work of reform and reconstruction. Whether the numberless minor confederacies which are now formed for the purpose of pushing forward particular measures, in season and out of season, will ever give up fighting for their own hand, and so remove that disturbing element in the party system which must necessarily throw it out of gear, remains to be seen. If we are obliged to answer this question in the negative, we must prepare ourselves for important constitutional changes at no remote date. It is many years ago since Mr Disraeli told the House of Commons that they had to choose between party government and personal government, whether hereditary or elective. When party government shows unmistakable signs of having worn itself out, and is degenerating into an assembly of cliques, what is to follow? The next five years, perhaps even the next session, will throw some light on this highly interesting question. We must not forget, merely because we once more have a powerful Government supported by a homogeneous party, that the party system is tested as much by the Opposition as by the Ministerialists; and that

only the other day cries were rife in all quarters against this "miserable party system," which had brought us to such and such a plight. Such language appeared even in the leading London journal, which represents pretty accurately the feeling of the middle and upper middle classes throughout the United Kingdom. We are dealing therefore with no empty bugbear, no mere shallow speculation of some schoolboy essayist, but with contingencies which have occurred to the minds of statesmen, historians, and experienced public writers not likely to compromise themselves by idle puerilities. We can only return, therefore, to what we set out by saying—namely, that the "settlement" of these important questions which Lord Salisbury is bound to undertake depends on our return to a healthier and sounder state of party government. In default of this, every one such question is sure to be ripped up again directly, and the public to be told that it has only been patched up, and that in a very bungling fashion. These misrepresentations, even if they do no immediate harm to the Government, are a great injury to the public, whom they keep in a perpetual state of uncertainty and irritation, till they are ripe for any change which promises them a moment's relief from it. There is a large number of voters who always think that any change must be for the better, and who never understand that the way to allay agitation is not to bribe the agitator, who, the more he gets, the more he is sure to demand.

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AN UNCROWNED KING.

CHAPTER VII.—CHECK.

"I FEEL that I have earned my night's repose," yawned Cyril to himself in the solitude of his own room. "If all the Thracians have worked as hard to-day as their king and his brother, they're an industrious people. Hullo! some of them must be at it still. I suppose old Drakovics has been hurrying them, for fear things won't be ready for the coronation."

His eye had caught a faint glimmer in the eastern windows of St Peter's chapel, which could hardly be the effect of moonlight, and as he turned in he congratulated himself that he was not obliged to work all night at putting up decorations. For an hour or so he slept the sleep of the weary; then he was aroused by shouts and cries pealing through the palace. "Another revolution!" was his first thought, as he jumped out of bed and groped for his re-

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volver; but on his throwing back the window-curtains, a flood of light poured into the room. The chapel of St Peter was blazing furiously, and the courtyard was full of guards and servants, some staring stupidly at the flames, others tumbling over one another in eager though vain efforts to take measures for stopping the fire.

"Put on some clothes and come out, Cyril," said Caerleon's voice at the door. "Those idiots there haven't an idea what to do."

Hastily obeying, Cyril found himself placed at the head of a band of water-carriers, while Caerleon took his stand close to the burning pile, and directed the throwing of the water as the buckets were passed from hand to hand. There were proper appliances in case of fire all over the palace, but the buckets were rusted through, and the hose

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with the aid of a detachment of sappers. We were searching for the crown jewels—which are now, alas! shapeless lumps of metal, their precious stones for the most part calcined—and we found distinct traces of petroleum in more places than one. Does not that speak for itself? Petroleum is never used in lighting the chapel, but it is a favourite weapon of incendiaries. Upon this discovery, I proceeded to interrogate the guard, who were all under arrest. Those who were posted last night at the gates were unanimous in declaring that no unauthorised person had passed in after the workmen had departed, with the exception of one woman, who said that she was the mother of one of the decorators employed, and that her son had left behind him his book of gold-leaf, which she had come to fetch. The sentries describe her as very old and bent, but with piercing dark eyes, and wearing the dress of the respectable artisan class. The acting master of the household had not yet locked the chapel doors, and the woman was therefore allowed to go in and look for the book, which took her some time. She came out with it in her hand, and the door was immediately locked. The theory is that she carried in with her a supply of petroleum in a can——”

“Or perhaps in bladders hung round her waist, as brandy used to be smuggled into England,” put in Cyril, who had been following the details with much interest.

M. Drakovics bowed. “Very possibly, milord. Having saturated the woodwork behind the screen of the sanctuary with the oil, she would arrange a slow-match which would not come in contact with it for some hours, and then go away, provided with a book of gold-leaf to deceive the guard. The

master of the household, looking in from the doorway, would notice nothing, and would lock the door and take away the key, leaving the match to do its work.”

“But why may not the culprit be the woman she gave herself out to be?” asked Caerleon.

“Because, your Majesty, the woman’s son and the other members of her family can all declare that from nine to ten o’clock, the time at which the incendiary did her work, Nicola Stanovics’s mother was engaged in a violent quarrel with her daughter-in-law, who had left her infant at home while she went out to see the illuminations. The old woman met her at the door as she returned, and their dispute almost ended in blows. Moreover, the guard, when confronted with her, declared without hesitation that she was not the woman they had admitted.”

“Well, that seems to clear the old lady, at any rate,” said Caerleon. “Your work has been most successful in a negative direction. Have you any positive clue to go upon?”

It did not appear that M. Drakovics had, though he was willing to impart all the theories that had been formed on the subject, but Cyril did not listen. His mind was occupied with a hypothesis of his own, the central fact of which was Madame O’Malachy’s headache the evening before. Again and again he went over the details, for his suspicions at first seemed preposterous, but the more he thought over the matter, the more likely did it seem that Madame O’Malachy had slipped out in disguise, carrying with her the necessary supply of petroleum, and successfully effected the firing of the chapel. His visit to the hotel with Caerleon had led him to this conclusion, inasmuch as if they had not called that evening no one would have known that Madame

O'Malachy was not spending the whole time in the society of her family. The plot must have been maturing for some time, for both the disguise and the petroleum would be difficult to procure without exciting suspicion, and it could not be doubted that its object was to delay the coronation,—though whether the lady had done her work in pursuance of orders from her Scythian employers, or with an eye to her daughter's future, Cyril, ignorant of his brother's parting conversation with her at Witeka, could not determine.

"What an actress the woman must be!" he said to himself. "What pluck, what nerve she has! But this sort of thing won't do. She will think nothing of dynamiting us soon, if this is the way she begins. We must take a hostage from her. She doesn't care a scrap for the girl; but if Louis, for whom she does seem to have a little natural affection, were safely installed here, she would think twice before blowing us up. I must get that settled."

"There is one thing that makes me regret less the postponement of the coronation," M. Drakovics was saying. "I have received this morning a cipher despatch from my agent at Czarigrad, saying that he finds the Roumi Government far more favourably disposed towards Thracia and your Majesty than we could have dared to hope. He has even received a hint from a very high quarter to the effect that if we could put off the coronation for a time, so as to avoid everything that might seem to have the appearance of a desire to force the hand of the Grand Signior, our right as a nation to choose our own sovereign might before very long be recognised. This would strengthen our position in Europe enormously. If Roum recognises us, Scythia can do little."

"But Scythia will in the mean-

time bring pressure on Roum not to recognise us," said Cyril. "Surely you are losing a great opportunity for the chance of an uncertain boon. Is it decided that the coronation is to be postponed?"

"What else can we do?" asked M. Drakovics. "The king must be crowned in St Peter's chapel, and with the crown of Alexander the Patriot. The chapel is in ruins, the crown a mere lump of metal, and both must be restored before they can be used."

"But this is madness!" cried Cyril. "Do you intend to wait for the chapel to be rebuilt? It may take months. After all, when it is restored, it won't be the old chapel, so why not have the coronation somewhere else at once?"

"Because you are not acquainted with our people, milord," was the studiously mild reply of M. Drakovics. "They would not recognise any king not crowned on that spot, and with that crown. Moreover, in a case like this, when our actions are certain to be jealously scrutinised in order to discover the least flaw in the legality of our proceedings, we must be doubly careful to do everything in the very strictest order."

"Then why not clear away the ruins and hold the ceremony in the open air, or in a tent?" cried Cyril. "There must be jewellers in Bellaviste, who would not take more than a day to knock together something sufficiently like a crown out of your lump of gold. Take my word for it, M. Drakovics, if we lose the day finally it will be by delay now."

"You must allow me to differ from you, milord," was the answer. "In my opinion, the day is much more likely to be lost through undue precipitation. But after all, the matter is entirely in his Majesty's hands. Is it your wish, sir, that

the coronation should take place immediately or not?"

"Well," said Caerleon, "you ought to know best, and of course it would be a very good thing to begin the reign with full recognition from Roum."

"Your reign has begun," said Cyril. "The coronation only puts a half-sentimental, half-religious seal on it."

"Still," said Caerleon, "we are not the best judges, Cyril. If M. Drakovics, who has done so much for Thracia, thinks that it will be more serviceable to the country to delay the coronation, I have no objection."

"That's all very well," thought Cyril. "You are thinking that in a month or two you ought to be able to break down Miss Nadia's scruples. I am sorry to be under the painful necessity of putting a spoke in your wheel, my dear brother."

"If your Majesty is pleased to delay the coronation," said M. Drakovics, "may I ask you to visit the Hôtel de Ville this morning? The people have been gathering from all the country round to witness the ceremony, and it will be necessary to explain to them what has occurred. There is another thing I was anxious to know. Your Majesty mentioned some days ago that your brother had some idea of acting as your private secretary. I see that correspondence is already beginning to pour in, and as the office is a very delicate and important one, I venture to ask whether Milord Cyril is still in the same mind?"

"M. Drakovics means me to earn my board and lodging," said Cyril, who had a grudge against the statesman for rejecting his counsel.

"I am quite sure that M. Drakovics means nothing of the kind,"

said Caerleon, sharply. "He knows very well that you are here as my guest."

"Your Majesty is not mistaken," said M. Drakovics. "Thracia owes far too much to your family not to desire to see as many of its members as possible. My reason for asking is that Milord Cyril has displayed such a talent for diplomacy that I am anxious not to lose his co-operation in the work I have in hand. His one fault is that, like all young diplomats, he wishes to begin, as you say in England, at the top of the tree, and in this he does himself an injustice, for his forte lies rather in working in combination with others than in isolated action."

"Well, Cyril, the bitter pill is pretty well gilded," said Caerleon, laughing. "What do you say? Will you take the situation?"

"I suppose I should have to read all your letters," said Cyril. "That sounds rather interesting. Then I should have to write the answers—not quite so delightful, but still passable. Yes; I'll take it."

"If your Majesty will permit me, I will give Milord Cyril a few hints as to his new duties," said M. Drakovics.

"Very well," returned Caerleon. "I am going to stroll round to the stables, Cyril. When your initiation is complete, you'll find me there."

"Now," said Cyril, closing the door on his brother, and turning to M. Drakovics, "I want to know what you mean by putting off the coronation in this way? You are giving the Scythians and their sympathisers a gratuitous triumph, and losing time of inestimable value. If you have a reason, why keep it a secret?"

"I have a reason, milord," answered M. Drakovics. "That my opinion does not accord with yours is a matter for regret; but I hope it

will not be anything more. I am deeply anxious that you should remain at Bellaviste, for I need your help."

"Oh, I suppose I may as well stay and take Caerleon's body home when you have got him shot as a filibuster by a Scythian force sent to restore order," said Cyril.

"You are pleased to be sarcastic, milord," said M. Drakovics. "While not in the least anticipating that the calamity of which you speak is likely to occur, I would ask you to remember that the cause is more important than the man. If Roum recognises our choice of a king, our future position as a free nation is unassailable, and we are justified in the sight of Europe. If your brother is crowned king at once, we are merely, under present circumstances, a vassal State which has rebelled, and elected its own ruler. No one could be more grateful to his Majesty than I am, but Thracia must come first."

"I see," said Cyril, "your business is to take care of Thracia. Very well; mine will be to take care of Caerleon. The kingdom will only be a secondary thing with me, as part of Caerleon's property."

"Then I hope, milord, that you will prove your care by persuading his Majesty to more wisdom than you both showed last night. To walk through the streets alone, and in disguise, in the midst of crowds of strangers, to the lodging of a family of Scythian spies, where the merest trifle—an accident with a pistol, a drop of poison in a cup of coffee—might have effected all that Scythia desires, can scarcely be called prudent."

"Well, if you had your eye on us all the time we ought to have been fairly safe," said Cyril, angry and taken aback.

"You surely do not think that I

could allow the king to risk his life so rashly without taking precautions for his safety?" said M. Drakovics. "You were followed the whole way by one of my most trusted agents in the police, a man whom you will do well always to order to accompany you if his Majesty chooses to go out again *incognito*. You had no idea that you were tracked, but he never lost sight of you."

"Until we reached the hotel, I suppose?" said Cyril.

"On the contrary, you were never more carefully protected than during your visit there. Ever since Colonel O'Malachy and his wife arrived in Bellaviste, a police agent in a room on the opposite side of the street has kept them under constant surveillance by means of mirrors ingeniously placed, so that you were in full view during the whole time you spent in their *salon*."

"But what is the object of this police shadowing?" asked Cyril, rather disgusted.

"To prevent mischief," returned M. Drakovics. "And although we did not succeed in stopping the burning of the chapel, yet we have discovered its author. Perhaps you would be surprised to hear how Madame O'Malachy was employed during the time of your visit last night?"

"On the contrary," said Cyril in his turn; "I am flattered by finding that you have come to the same conclusion as myself. She was burning the chapel."

M. Drakovics was a little disconcerted. "I congratulate you on the soundness of your instincts, milord," he said.

"But why did you not prevent the fire, if you knew of it?" asked Cyril.

"Unfortunately, milord, my agent was so much occupied in watching his Majesty and yourself,

that he failed to observe Madame O'Malachy leave the hotel, and only saw her return. It was not until he heard the evidence of the sentries that he divined what her errand had been. But perhaps you will now agree with me in my estimate of the O'Malachy family?"

"By the bye," said Cyril, quickly, "what did you mean just now by saying that you needed my help?"

"It was on the subject of his Majesty's marriage," said M. Drakovics, looking rather confused. "This morning, before you came in, I ventured to suggest to the king the advisability of his consolidating his position by an alliance with some lady belonging to a royal house, but he refused to allow me to say anything on the subject."

"I should think so!" cried Cyril. "Englishmen are not accustomed to submit to having their marriages arranged for them, and Caerleon least of all. Now, M. Drakovics, I thought this matter was to be left to me. Am I to have a free hand or not? If I am to be interfered with, I will have nothing to do with it."

"If you can guarantee a successful result, milord, I shall be most happy to leave it to you," returned M. Drakovics.

"Because," continued Cyril, "you are making exactly the same mistake as Miss O'Malachy. I believe she thinks that she can tire Caerleon out by holding aloof from him, and you intend to make use of the information you have gained, by dint of spying on her mother, to terrify the whole family into leaving the kingdom. Miss O'Malachy is as anxious to be out of Thracia as you are to get rid of her; but you had better not put that beautiful plan of yours into execution unless you want Caerleon to go after her. He will have his answer, and if you will

leave things to me I will arrange that he shall have it soon, that the affair may be over."

"You seem very certain of success, milord."

"If I am to succeed, I must be absolutely free. The first thing to be done is to give Lieutenant O'Malachy a commission in the palace guard."

"And why, milord?"

"To keep him out of mischief, and to prevent his mother's perceiving that we have discovered her plot. This is my test, monsieur. Is it to be done?"

"It is," returned M. Drakovics, after a severe mental struggle. "The matter is so important that it is worth even a dangerous experiment."

When, after his protracted interview with M. Drakovics, Cyril went in search of Caerleon, his first words on finding him were to suggest that it would be a graceful recognition of the sacrifices Louis O'Malachy had made in the cause of Thracia to appoint him at once to a lieutenancy in the palace guard, thus testifying special confidence in him by placing him close to the sovereign's own person. Caerleon looked surprised.

"I think it's a very good idea," he said; "but you have always been so suspicious of the poor fellow's motives that I should not have expected you to propose it. I will have the commission made out at once. And as we are now on the subject of the O'Malachy family, I may as well remind you of something of which Drakovics is apparently not aware. He attacked me this morning about marrying; but you know, if he doesn't, that I intend to marry Miss O'Malachy, and no one else."

"I never imagined that you wanted to imitate the Grand Signior of Roum, and marry twenty or thirty

ladies at once," said Cyril; but seeing Caerleon's face darken, he added hastily, "I beg your pardon, old man. I was only joking. Do you intend to make formal proposals at once to papa for the hand of mademoiselle?"

"Not yet," said Caerleon. "You see," he went on quickly, as if it was a relief to unburden himself to his brother, "I can't tell a bit how she'll take it. She has never given me the least encouragement, and lately she has scarcely spoken to me. Unfortunately, I can't help guessing that the kingdom would weigh pretty heavily with her parents, and I don't want the poor girl worried into marrying me, nor her life made a burden to her because she won't. Madame O'Mahady has promised me her support; but though it sounds a little ungrateful, I would rather manage the business without her interference."

"I don't think any amount of worry would make Miss O'Mahady do a thing she had determined not to do," said Cyril. "But seriously, Caerleon, I can't believe she means to marry you. She gave you the cold shoulder pointedly enough last night. Can't you chuck up the business, old man? I don't think you care for her very particularly."

"Don't you?" asked Caerleon, looking down on him with a smile. "My dear boy, you are very young still."

"If you mean to insinuate that I haven't had twice as much experience in affairs of the kind as you have," began Cyril, with great show of indignation, "I'll—"

"I daresay—ten times as much. That only proves what I say."

"Well, don't look superior. It's the other way. Now, look

Miss O'Mahady's feelings before approaching her father. I'll manage to make an opportunity for you to speak to her alone."

"Thanks, but I think I can look after my own opportunities."

"No, you can't; not as king with Drakovic and his spies always prowling after you. Do you know that we had a fellow behind us last night?"

"Yes, I felt sure at the time that we were being dogged."

"But why didn't you say so?"

"I didn't want to make you nervous."

"Stuff!" cried Cyril, emphatically. "You were afraid I should consider it prudent to give up the expedition and go back. Keep your thoughtfulness for Miss O'Mahady in future. After that, you don't deserve a good turn, but I will mention that I am going down to the O'Mahadys' this morning to tell them of dear Louise's death. Shall I take any message for you?"

"I'll come too," said Caerleon promptly.

"No, you won't. You are at the Hotel de Ville, to hear of Drakovic's report from the island. It would be 'Hamlet' with Eric left out if you weren't there. Will shall I take her a bouquet in your name? No, that would be too pronounced—might be regarded as a declaration. Shall I say anything to her for you?"

"Yes; you can say that I am to begin this very day the day she suggested to me."

"All right; nothing like you to work at once. Not, of course, in uniform and duty. I am not of this morning."

Coming down to the hall and Louise and the

O'Mahady

in the market-place. Going upstairs, he found Nadia in the sitting-room, arranging the flowers for the table, carefully and conscientiously, as she did everything, adding a spray here, and taking one away there, and holding up the vase to see the effect, then lifting everything out and beginning again.

Before her stood a vase in which her mother had placed carelessly two or three blossoms and a spray or two of feathery fern, which seemed to have arranged themselves, but of which the effect was perfect. By the table stood Madame O'Malachy, buttoning her long gloves and criticising freely her daughter's work.

"You have no taste, Nadia. Surely it must be evident, even to you, that a brick is not the best model for a bouquet? Don't pull the flowers about so much; you will ruin them, and I cannot get any more to-day."

"I am commissioned to say that the hothouses at the palace are at your disposal, madame, if you would honour my brother by allowing him to send you some flowers," said Cyril, coming forward.

"His Majesty's conduct is angelic," returned Madame O'Malachy. "But what are all the flowers in Thracia if the artist's eye for their

arrangement is wanting?" She had taken the vase from Nadia and removed half its contents, then, with a twirl here and a poke there, transformed the remainder into a thing of beauty. "I regret to say that the artistic instinct, the soul of poetry, is wanting in my daughter. She is very thorough, extremely conscientious, but what one may call—not heavy, that would be unkind—shall we say *solid*? I am perpetually worrying myself to discover why she bears no resemblance at all to me. 'A reversion to an earlier type,' I suppose the scientific gentlemen would call it; I say that she is a trial of my endurance. For me, I am not at all conscientious, I do nothing thoroughly, but I think I am not heavy?" She paused with her eyebrows uplifted in interrogation; and Cyril, though he had been reflecting what wretchedly bad form it was for a woman to try to make her daughter feel small in this way, had presence of mind enough to answer that such a word could never be mentioned in the same breath with Madame O'Malachy's name.

"But I must hurry away," the lady went on, "or O'Malachy will come up to look for me. I shall hear your news when I return, Milord Cyril."

CHAPTER VIII.—FOR HIS GOOD.

"I think I have one piece of news you will like to hear, at any rate," said Cyril, as Madame O'Malachy rustled out of the room and down the corridor towards the lift.

Nadia turned her grey eyes on him. "You did not come here to offer us hothouse flowers," she said. "There is something else you have to say."

"Won't you believe that I came

to enjoy the delightful conversation of Madame and yourself?" asked Cyril, lazily, for he was in a particularly comfortable chair, and found the spectacle of Nadia's laborious dealing with the flowers very entertaining.

"No," she answered, bluntly, irritated by his manner.

"Well, Caesarleon intends to offer your brother a commission in the

palace guard. Is that important enough to satisfy you?"

"I daresay it is important, but it is not what you came to say."

"You are a little exacting, mademoiselle. Is this what you want? My brother asked me to tell you that he proposes to begin to-day the investigation you recommended to him."

"That is good!" she cried. "I knew I should not be disappointed in him. But you have another message still."

"Excuse me, I have no other message, although my business with you grows, if I may say so, out of that last message."

"Precisely, and I know what it is. You wish to say that his Majesty's eager compliance with my wishes betokens a state of affairs which you, as a man of the world, consider highly inexpedient in connection with the King of Thracia and an unknown foreigner."

"I had no intention of saying anything so rude; but I will own that although when Caerleon and I had the honour of meeting your family first, I saw no insuperable objection to his pleasing himself in marrying, things are different now. I blame myself very much that I did not foresee this and try——"

"I don't want your excuses, Lord Cyril," interrupted Nadia. "Let us keep to the facts as they are. They are sufficiently obvious. I agree with you, that for the king to marry me would probably cost him his throne, and that is a sacrifice I should not accept."

"I'm very glad you see it in this light," began Cyril, rather taken aback by her coolness; but she caught him up.

"You know quite well that I should have preferred our acquaintance to cease when we parted at Witeka, and that since that could not be, I am most anxious to leave

Thracia as soon as possible. I have done all I could to induce my parents to return to Janoszwart, but in vain. You must do your part. Why have you not helped me? Why have you given Louis this commission, when it will only be an excuse for our remaining in the country?"

"As a delicate compliment to the future Queen of Thracia," said Cyril, in his smoothest tones. "I am sure that is the light in which Caerleon regards it."

"He should not make so sure," said Nadia. "Queen of Thracia you at least know that I shall never be. I expect you to help me in disappointing the King for his good. This is my plan. My parents are Scythian agents—you know that already, but I make the admission that you may have full right to take action"—and she laughed bitterly. "As for Louis, I don't know whether he has accepted the commission or not; but if he has, it is only that he may do you greater harm. He is here for the purpose of plotting against the independence of Thracia. Well, then, have us arrested to-night and conveyed to the frontier; then your anxieties may cease."

"I beg your pardon; they would only begin," said Cyril. "You are leaving Caerleon out of your reckoning altogether, Miss O'Malachy. Do you know, I wished most fervently as I came down here just now that I could bring myself to say that I was come to make terms with you on Caerleon's behalf and with his knowledge. Matters would be so much easier if I could only request you in his name to leave the kingdom, and not seek to continue a friendship begun under such different circumstances. But I couldn't make up my mind to take away the poor fellow's character in that way, and so——"

"I should never have believed you!" cried Nadia, with flashing eyes.

"You are very flattering. But if I had assured you that it was true?"

"I should have asked the king himself."

"Surely not!" said Cyril. "I thought that young ladies never, under any circumstances, spoke out boldly and asked for an explanation!"

"I should," said Nadia, proudly. "I would do anything rather than believe him false and a coward."

"Well, unfortunately, I can't make you think him so," said Cyril. "I know perfectly well that if you left Bellaviste, as you propose, he would simply follow you anywhere, and insist upon your marrying him."

"I would never do it," said Nadia, her lips white.

"I never thought you would; but I am afraid it would move Europe to laughter to see the King of Thracia following from place to place a young lady——"

"The penniless daughter of a Scythian spy!" cried Nadia, with a fierce laugh. "You are right, Lord Cyril; it would be worse than wrong, it would be ridiculous. And ridicule must never touch anything connected with Lord Cyril Mortimer; he could not endure it—it would crush him. Well, I will not only leave Bellaviste, but I will write to his Majesty a letter explaining why I do so. Does that satisfy you?"

"But—excuse me," said Cyril; "has my brother ever really proposed to you?"

"If he had, he would have had his answer already," returned Nadia. "Most certainly he has not."

"You really must pardon me—but do you intend to write a letter declining a proposal you have never received?"

"Why not? You know, and he knows, and I know, that he loves me. Why make all this trouble? You do not wish him to write to me first? I might keep his letter, sell it to a newspaper, make it the groundwork of a European scandal, who knows? Come, I will write now: you shall dictate it if you like."

"Excuse me, but this will never do," said Cyril, refusing to move as she tried to pass him and reach the writing-table. "Do you think Caerleon would ever receive a letter—not even written in answer to one from him—as containing your final decision? He would see at once that there had been outside influence at work, and suspect that it had been written under pressure. He must hear everything from your own lips."

"Oh, why must you make it so hard for me? Let me write," entreated Nadia, standing before him with clasped hands.

"It is impossible," said Cyril, firmly. "You must see him."

"Must I? Very well, then, I will," said Nadia, drawing a deep breath. "But remember, Lord Cyril, I will tell no lies. He shall know my reason for refusing him."

"I thought that young ladies considered themselves justified in telling a little fib on such occasions," said Cyril. "In saying that they found they did not care in quite the right way, or something of the kind?"

"The young ladies with whom you are acquainted may tell fibs," returned Nadia, with a cool incisiveness which reminded him of her mother, "but I do not. Is it not hard enough to have to refuse the man who loves me, without doing it by means of a lie?"

"How can you expect him to take his dismissal if you go into

details like that?" asked Cyril. "Can't you simply refuse him without giving reasons? It is a lady's privilege, you know."

"Certainly not!" cried Nadia, fiercely. "He shall not think that the woman to whom he has given his love is insensible—a stone. He shall know that her suffering is at least as great as his."

"Well, you have your own ideas as to imparting consolation, certainly," said Cyril. "I suppose I must not quarrel with you, so long as you do send him off."

"Of course I shall send him away," said Nadia. "I have known for a week that it must be done. Bring him here, and I will tell him. Perhaps you would wish to remain in the room, so as to be sure that I keep faith with you?"

"Caerleon must not come here," said Cyril, thoughtfully, disregarding the taunt. "Our chief aim must be to avoid notice. I must contrive a meeting for you somewhere, which may seem accidental, even if it is observed."

"Do you wish to destroy my good name as well as your brother's happiness, Lord Cyril?" she asked, cuttingly. Cyril started.

"You are determined to put me in the wrong," he said, facing her indignant eyes without flinching. "If you will only remember that my brother's good name would be at least as much affected as yours in such a case, you will judge me more correctly. I can assure you that the only meeting of which I thought was one in the intervals of a dance, or some entertainment of the kind. Surely you must see the need for secrecy? It is not merely that my brother must not marry you. He must marry some one else."

Cyril had his revenge, for Nadia, after one wild start, stood as if she had been turned to stone.

"Another woman?" she gasped. "Who is she? Do I know her? No; don't tell me her name. I shall hear it quite soon enough, and I don't want to hate her. Some princess? and she is to marry him?—and he is mine."

"I am sure you must see," Cyril went on quietly, "that both for her sake and his we must get this matter settled without any fuss."

"If she marries him, I don't think a little trouble need hurt her," said Nadia, enviously.

"I hope it may be so. But you must remember that this marriage would be an arranged thing—a literal *mariage de convenance*, indeed. We could hardly expect her to feel towards Caerleon as—as you do, and although, if she cared for him, she might overlook even a scandal, yet if she did not, the merest whisper might turn her against him. Without considering her feelings in such a case, you must remember that it would be very painful indeed for Caerleon. I am sure you would not wish their married life to be unhappy."

"If she married him for the sake of the crown, she would deserve to be unhappy," said Nadia.

"I am afraid we must leave that to her own conscience," said Cyril.

"Conscience!" cried Nadia, "and what of yours? If the King ever discovers what you have done to-day, I think—I should be almost sorry—even for you."

"I leave myself in your hands, you see, in perfect confidence."

"Oh yes, honour among thieves!" said Nadia, bitterly. "We are both plotting against the King, so we may well keep faith with one another. Have you delivered all your messages now, Lord Cyril? If so, I must ask you to go, for I am busy. Pray ring for a waiter to attend you down-stairs."

She gave him a distant bow, and

remained standing by the table, tall and rigid, until he was out of sight, then dragged herself slowly across the corridor to her own room, groping with outspread hands as though in darkness, opened the door, entered, locked it, and threw herself on the floor, a trembling, sobbing heap.

"Quite an exciting morning!" said Cyril to himself, as he strolled back to the palace. "It's a pity that that Nadia girl can't be queen, after all. She is cut out for ruling a nation given to revolutions, like this one. I can fancy her facing a yelling mob without turning a hair. But melodrama in daily life is a bore. After our conversation one feels mean, somehow—rather as if one had been committing murder."

All unconscious of what Nadia stigmatised as the plot against his happiness, Caerleon spent the morning in the balcony of the Hôtel de Ville, listening, with what patience he might, to speeches of which he could not understand a word. It was his first opportunity of making the acquaintance of the other members of the Drakovics Ministry, who were on ordinary occasions rather cast into the shade by the commanding personality of their leader. The greater number of them were country gentlemen, belonging to the class of landed proprietors which formed the backbone of the nation, for each man's tenants and villagers followed his lead as faithfully as any feudal vassals could have done. Living in rude plenty, untouched by habits of western luxury, on their own estates, these chieftains had found their patriotic and religious instincts outraged by the irregular life and Scythian sympathies of the late king, and they had loyally given their support to M. Drakovics at the time of the revolution, believing him to be the

only man who could save the country from the various dangers which threatened it. They had accepted posts in the Administration merely in order that the prestige of their names might assist the Premier in his task, and he reciprocated the service by allowing them to remain quietly at home, unless their presence was demanded on some important occasion, such as a parliamentary crisis; but they had rallied around him to-day in their full strength, conspicuous in their rich national costume, magnificent with fur and gold embroideries. Caerleon they were ready to welcome as the Premier's choice, but their first sight of him disposed them to take a fancy to him for his own sake; and when some one had remembered that the English were supposed to be, as a nation, lovers of sport, he received so many invitations to come and hunt various animals that he might have imagined that life in Thracia was mainly devoted to the chase.

The persons who really carried on the work of government were not the grey-haired chiefs who surrounded their new king, but the army of inferior officials to whom the Scythian newspapers were wont to refer scathingly as "briefless barristers and unsuccessful journalists." They were western to a fault, wore their black broadcloth as though to the manner born, and it was easy to see that it was on them, and not on the titular heads of their departments, that M. Drakovics relied for the prosecution of his policy. Each of these men was directly responsible to him, for the nominal Ministers relied on him to tell them what papers they were to sign, or what orders they were to give, and he sent them what subordinates he chose. On these subordinates he could depend, for he had raised them from their original

obscurity, and all their interests were bound up with his, so that they clung to him through thick and thin. Perilous as such an autocracy may appear, the dangers which usually accompany an experiment of the kind had not yet shown themselves in any great degree, probably owing to the common peril from Scythia which menaced ruler and ruled alike, while the administration of King Peter Franza had been so corrupt that the people hailed the present one as a foretaste of the millennium.

For some time Caerleon found abundant interest in watching the throng around him, while the Ministers made speeches one after the other, or presented loyal addresses from the districts they represented, and the people in the market-place cheered whenever they caught an allusion to the revolution or to the new king. When this preliminary business was over, M. Drakovics came forward for the most important event of the day—the speech which was to explain the postponement of the coronation. As he proceeded, Caerleon became interested in spite of his ignorance of the language, for the Premier's tones and gestures were almost eloquent enough to take the place of words. He had appeared hitherto as an astute politician, genuinely patriotic, no doubt, according to his lights, but not capable of any very lofty flight of imagination. But now Caerleon could wonder no longer at his power of swaying the susceptible Thracians, since he himself could feel the force of his scathing denunciation of the former *régime*, his reference to the revolution, brief yet full of meaning, his indignant declaration that to Scythia, their constant enemy, they owed the two years of uncertainty and instability which had retarded the rightful development of the

country, and his joyful reminder that at last they had found a prince willing to cast in his lot with theirs, and to dare and suffer as a Thracian. When the wild outburst of cheering which followed the last sentence had ceased, M. Drakovics continued in a lower voice, charged with deep meaning. Scythian jealousy was not yet dead, Scythian enmity was not even alumbering; already had an attempt been made to prevent the ratification of the people's choice. Be it so! Thracia was in no hurry; she would delay the ceremony of crowning her king for a while, and make more seemly preparations for conducting it with fitting splendour. Scythia had endeavoured to brand the opening of the new reign with a bad omen, by the destruction of the ancient relic which was at once the sign and the home of the nation's faith; but Thracia would turn the omen into one of joy, for as St Peter's chapel rose stronger and more beautiful from its ashes, so would the kingdom of Carlino rise powerful and pure from the unavoidable disorders of the revolution, and the oppression and corruption which had marked the rule of Peter Franza and Ivan Sertchaieff.

"If that man's words are equal to his voice and manner," said Caerleon to himself, as M. Drakovics ceased, "he must be one of the greatest orators in the world."

More speeches from different representatives of the people followed; but at last the King was able to return to the palace, and to seek his brother in the room which M. Drakovics had recommended should be allotted to him for the performance of his duties as Caerleon's secretary. Cyril was testing the security of the cupboards which lined the panelled walls, and he was so resolutely bent on expatiating on the business-like appearance of

his surroundings that it was some time before Caerleon could put the question he was anxious to ask.

"Well, did you see her?"

"Oh, Miss O'Malachy?" asked Cyril, raising his eyebrows. "Yes, I saw her. I can't say she impressed me favourably. She never does, somehow."

"Happily it's not necessary that she should," returned Caerleon, sharply. "When am I to see her?"

"I have been thinking about that, and I can't find an opportunity earlier than that ball which the municipality are to give next week."

"But how am I to speak to her when we are dancing?"

"You don't imagine she would dance? Sit out, of course. This is how we must work it. I will ask her to sit out with me, and take her into the conservatory, or some place of that kind, where you will be waiting. Then I'll keep guard until you have said what you want to say (I hope and trust it won't take long), and I will convey her back to her mother."

"I think I am capable of doing that," said Caerleon.

"Yes, if she accepts you; but I don't for a moment think she will. You see what I mean, old man?—it seems rather a nasty thing to say—but I don't believe she cares for you enough. She's as proud as Lucifer, and people are bound to say that she married you for the sake of the crown."

"I believe she is sensible enough not to care what people say if she once sees it right to marry me. But you never have understood her. Look here, Cyril; why should we put it off so long? Let us give a ball ourselves one evening this week."

"How can we, when you haven't a lady at the head of affairs? You

might let yourself in for most horrible awkwardness. I don't even know whether it would be proper for Madame O'Malachy to bring her daughter. You can't go compromising yourself in the eyes of Europe in this way. Don't think of giving balls until you are married, unless you like to get Mrs Sadleir out from home, and introduce her as your aunt and the natural head of your establishment."

"I'm certain she would never come," said Caerleon, gloomily. "But after all" and his face brightened, "perhaps it is as well to wait for a week. If I can tell Nadia that I have come to some conclusion on the question of temperance legislation, it may please her, so I will set to work at once. I am going to send to England for some books I want. I don't know whether you would like me to order any for you?"

"Give me the list, and let me write," said Cyril, quickly. "You have a secretary now, Caerleon, and you mustn't go sending orders to tradesmen with your own royal hand. It's making yourself too cheap."

But writing to a London bookseller was a mere trifle compared with the work which Caerleon now undertook as a necessary consequence of his promise to Nadia. Cyril showed no inclination for the inquisitorial rambles he meditated, and he therefore secured the services of the detective whom M. Drakovics had recommended, and who spoke English sufficiently well to be of use. Under his guidance, the king paid unexpected visits to different parts of his capital at various hours of the day, mingling freely with the people who thronged the *cafés* and there spent their time in drinking brandy and discussing politics. It was in vain to attempt any disguise, the Thracians knew their sovereign's

height and figure too well for that; but they are a polite nation, and when Caerleon came among them *incognito*, they did not appear to recognise him, perceiving that he wished to acquaint himself with the national life. Perhaps they were also a little flattered by the interest he showed in their pursuits, for they were always ready to talk, and through the medium of his escort he obtained a great deal of valuable information, the result of which went far to convince him that Nadia was in the right, and that temperance legislation of some kind was a crying need of the country. There seemed to be no effective restraint on the sale of spirits, and during the last two years especially the vendors had reaped a golden harvest. The feeling of uncertainty and unrest caused by the revolution, and the delay in obtaining a king, had disposed the people to indulge in much talk and speculation on political subjects; and to enjoy this fully they naturally resorted to the *cafés*, where coffee proved inadequate to quench their patriotic thirst. That some change must be made in this state of affairs if the country was to prosper, Caerleon quickly recognised,—a decision the wisdom of which was confirmed by the statistics which M. Drakovics obtained at his request from government officers all over Thracia; and the subject cost him much anxious thought during the week which preceded the municipal ball at the Hôtel de Ville.

To Cyril, also, this was a period not devoid of anxiety. In spite of all his precautions, the secret of Caerleon's admiration for Nadia had become public property. This disclosure was mainly due to an American journalist who was supposed to be writing up the minor Courts of Europe for the benefit of aspiring New York belles, and who had

hastened to Thracia as soon as he heard of the accession of a bachelor king, and taken up his quarters at the Hôtel Occidental. At the *table d'hôte* he fell in with the O'Malachy family, and was immediately captivated by the cosmopolitan charms of Madame O'Malachy. From her he learnt all that there was to be learnt about the new sovereign, and not improbably a good deal more; and since nothing is sacred to the New Journalist, he worked up what he heard into what he called "A Real Royal Romance," for the columns of the paper he represented. The details caused great excitement among the heiresses of the Empire City, and filtered gradually back, through the medium of English and Parisian newspapers, to those of Bellaviste, where M. Drakovics, after reading them, made Cyril's life a burden to him.

"There has been frightful mismanagement somewhere!" he cried, charging into the secretary's office on the very morning of the municipal ball, after Cyril had with difficulty restrained him hitherto from issuing edicts for the suppression of the offending newspapers and the expulsion of the American special correspondent. "This is the point to which your diplomacy has led us, milord. Here is the editor of the 'Fifth Avenue Crier' telegraphing to this Mr Hicks, 'Cable immediately full particulars of Miss O'Malachy's appearance, style of dress, taste in perfumes and bonbons. All the latest novelties here are named after her. Send any recent portraits.' And here in Bellaviste we have the whole female population, from the wives of the Ministers to the shop-girls, crowding the street in front of the hotel to catch a glimpse of her, and insisting on dressing their hair like hers. It is intolerable!"

"It is," assented Cyril. "But I

hope this state of affairs will come to an end to-day. If it does not, I shall perceive that you have not adhered to our compact. Have confidence in me, and you will see that it will be all right. Only you must be absolutely passive at the ball to-night; and if you happen to miss my brother from the room at the same time as Miss O'Malachy, merely try to cover his absence as far as possible. If you don't, I give you fair warning, I'll advise her to marry him."

"Naturally I will keep to our agreement, milord," said M. Drakovics, and went away unhappy. But Cyril was doomed not to be left in peace this morning. Another visitor was announced—this time, the O'Malachy, who entered with his most military air and a look of repressed sadness on his face.

"Come to play the outraged parent!" groaned Cyril, mentally, and he was not mistaken. The O'Malachy refused to take a chair, and stood tall and solemn in the middle of the floor, looking at Cyril more in sorrow than in anger.

"Lord Cyril," he said, "I'm aware that your position and ours have changed since circumstances first introduced us to each other. But I am still a father, with a father's feelings, and the representative of the ancient kings of Leitrum is not a man that can rightly be slighted. I'd willingly have remained with me family in our modest obscurity, but we have been removed from it by the King's action. I am not an ambitious man, there's no one can accuse me of thrusting me daughter upon his Majesty, but neither will I have a slur cast upon her. You know as well as I do how greatly your brother sought me daughter's presence until a week ago. Since then he has never come near her, and people are talking. I ask you

plainly, what are his Majesty's intentions?"

"The most honourable possible," replied Cyril, as lightly as he could. "I may mention to you, in the strictest confidence, that my brother is hoping to propose to Miss O'Malachy at the ball to-night. Of course she will be there!"

"The last thing I heard was that she did not dance, and would not come," said the O'Malachy, ruefully. Cyril smiled.

"I think Madame O'Malachy will be able to induce her to come, if you take them a special message from me to say that her presence is indispensable," he said.

"Ah now, if you could write that to them in the King's name?" suggested the O'Malachy, brightening.

"Wouldn't you like to have it to show?" thought Cyril. Aloud he added, "I think you must know, O'Malachy, that M. Drakovics is bent upon the King's marrying some lady belonging to a royal house. Under these circumstances, it is as well not to give him any opportunity of interfering until my brother has settled things with Miss O'Malachy. Such a paper as you propose might lead to complications with him."

"I dislike all this secrecy greatly," grumbled the O'Malachy. "Why would not his Majesty have given some public hint of his intentions? 'Twould have been an excellent opportunity when he gazetted himself honorary colonel of the Carlino Regiment."

"My dear O'Malachy, would you have him imply that your daughter was ready to jump at his offer?" asked Cyril, and he looked rather nonplussed.

"I'll not keep you longer now," he said, moving towards the door. "You understand, Lord Cyril, that in case of—of an alliance between your family and mine, me

wife and I would esteem it alike our duty and our pleasure to place what little experience and influence we may possess at the disposal of his Majesty and the Thracian Government?"

"What a double-dyed old traitor he is!" thought Cyril, as he re-

turned from seeing his visitor to the door. "I should prefer his enmity to his friendship."

And having disposed of the matter satisfactorily, he applied himself to more important business, thinking no more of the evening until it was time to dress for the ball.

CHAPTER IX.—A WOMAN OF HER WORD.

The ball given by the municipality of Bellaviste at the Hôtel de Ville in honour of their new king was the grandest entertainment ever seen in the city. Every one who had the slightest claim to receive an invitation was present, with the exception of the agents representing the various Powers, and the staffs of their respective consulates, who held themselves severely aloof from a festivity of which the *raison d'être* was the social inauguration of a sovereignty not recognised by Europe. The display of Thracian costumes and Parisian toilettes was dazzling, but Madame O'Malachy and her daughter were the observed of all observers. Mr Hicks, the American newspaper man, who had attended so many society functions that he knew as much about female dress as the smartest lady paragraphist that ever reported an aristocratic wedding, was inclined to be disappointed in Nadia's appearance. There was a kind of affectation of simplicity, he thought, a too evident desire to emphasise the distance between Caerleon and herself, in her severe black dress, cut barely low enough to pass muster on such an occasion, and in the absence of any relief, in the shape of flowers or ornaments, that marked it. Did the beggar-maid don her oldest rags when Cophetua came to woo her? Mr Hicks thought not. And again, why did

Miss O'Malachy appear so pale and reluctant as she followed her mother into the room, and so anxious and unhappy when her eye rested on the King? Mere excitement would not account for her troubled expression, and she was sure enough of her prize not to be fearful as to the outcome of the ordeal of the evening. Was it—could it be—Mr Hicks ground his teeth as he intercepted a disapproving glance levelled at Nadia by Cyril, and felt for one agonised moment that he had missed the most thrilling point of his romance—was there a rivalry between the brothers?

"I call it real mean of the old lady never to have given me a hint," he groaned, thinking of the extra columns of copy such a hint would have supplied, but presently he grew calm again. "There's nothing of the sort, or those two fellows couldn't carry on as they are doing. A woman can be as sweet as possible to another when she hates her like poison; but two men can't be easy together when they have quarrelled about a girl."

Reassured to find that he had not let slip an opportunity, he set himself again to watch the glittering scene, and observed that Caerleon invited Nadia to dance the first dance with him, as soon as he had done his duty to the wives of the city fathers. He saw Madame O'Malachy's thrill of anxious expectancy as the King approached

her, and divined instantly that the offer of such an honour was in itself equivalent to a proposal. But Nadia declined it, though her watchful mother softened the refusal by adding that she did not dance.

"He shouldn't have come to ask her himself," soliloquised Mr Hicks, who knew a good deal more about royal etiquette than did most of the exalted personages at whose Courts he sojourned. "Ought to have sent his brother, or his equerry—if he has one. And she had no business to refuse, anyway. A girl that don't dance should not go to Court balls."

And he turned away in disgust, though still watching Nadia out of the corner of his eye, until, when several dances more had been gone through, he saw Cyril sauntering up. He also saw Nadia shiver slightly, then sit very erect, and he guessed that the fateful moment had come.

"Will you sit out this dance with me?" asked Cyril, adjusting one of his sleeve-links as he spoke. The American, watching him, thought the action a piece of aristocratic rudeness, but Cyril was merely doing his best not to look at Madame O'Malachy. If she once had an inkling of his compact with her daughter, she was quite capable, he felt, of making a scene in public, supposing that she judged it to be to her interest to do so, and it was with considerable relief that he succeeded in avoiding her eye, and left her engrossed in conversation with Mr Hicks. With Nadia on his arm, he led the way to one of the smaller balconies, which were all curtained off from the corridors, and decorated with plants and palms, and here he found her a seat.

"Caerleon may not be here just yet," he said. "I saw him dancing with Madame Sertchaieff just now.

As she is the War Minister's wife, he has to be civil to her, you know." Nadia vouchsafed no answer to his cheerful commonplaces, but sat still, her rigid hands outstretched before her.

"I was very lucky," said a voice, and Caerleon drew back the curtain and stood before them, in all the magnificence of the full-dress uniform of the Carlino Regiment. "I caught my spur in Madame Sertchaieff's dress," he went on, "and tore it so badly that she had to go and get it sewn up. Now, Cyril, old man, if you will add to your kindness by making yourself scarce for a little while, I shall be much obliged."

Resisting the temptation to give Nadia a last glance of warning, Cyril departed obediently, and mounted guard in the corridor with an air of philosophical calmness, which he was very far from feeling. If she should fail him now! "It would make Thracia too hot to hold me," he mused, "for she's bound to tell Caerleon the whole story at once," and he shifted his position impatiently as he pictured the look of pain and contempt which the revelation would bring into Caerleon's honest eyes. He would have been still more anxious as to the future if he could have heard the words in which, without wasting time on preliminaries, his brother went straight to the matter in hand.

"I am going to ask you to make a great sacrifice for me, Nadia. Those silly women out there may think that it's something very grand to be Queen of Thracia, but you know better, and so do I. It means isolation, and worry, and being misunderstood and thwarted, and it is very likely to mean danger, perhaps death. There are not many women I could ask to share these things with me; but I think that you care

for me enough to be willing to help me through."

He had struck the right chord, and the eloquence of Nadia's eyes encouraged him to go on.

"I know," he said, taking her hands in his, "that it doesn't seem to be the proper thing for me to throw it all on you, and ask you to take me as a charity, but it seems to appeal to you more if it is put in that light. Doesn't it signify to you at all that I care for you, Nadia? that I have loved you since the first day I saw you? I don't think you can have an idea of what you are to me. I wish I could make you understand how I love you. Look at me—look into my eyes, and perhaps you will see."

But Nadia shivered, and drew her hands away from his. The vehemence of his tone frightened her, and she dared not meet his eye. She could not say a word, for the lump in her throat seemed to choke her. He noticed her agitation, and tried to speak more calmly.

"I don't think you can possibly know," he said, "what it is to a man who has become accustomed to look at things in an ordinary everyday way, to be brought face to face with a woman whose sole idea is to do right. One's courage fails sometimes, when one is alone against the world, and I want you to help me to do what is right, for the sake of the kingdom."

"I can't marry you," gasped Nadia, looking up at him with anguished eyes; "it would not be right."

"Not right! Why not?" he asked in surprise.

"Everything. My parents—Louis—"

"I am sure you need not trouble yourself about them," said Caerleon, with an involuntary smile at the thought of the ease with which the

O'Malashy family would most probably be managed. "Louis is provided for in the army, and your father and mother will give up their wandering life, and settle down quietly here."

"But it is myself!" cried Nadia, desperately. "I am not what you want for a wife, not good enough, not—not important enough. I should do nothing but bring trouble upon you. I am afraid to marry you. I dare not do it. I will not."

"I think you will, when you realise how much I want you," said Caerleon, all his fighting instincts roused by her opposition. "Why, Nadia, I am offering you work, and you know you have often told me that it is wrong to refuse work when it comes in your way. You cannot tell me that you mean to cast me off because you are afraid of what people will say!"

"Oh, why will you make me say it!" she cried, driven to bay by his tone. "I will not marry you, then, because you ought to marry a princess—some one who has been brought up to be queen, and whose family will be a support to you in Europe. That is what you must do."

"Nadia!" he said in astonishment, "you tell me to marry a woman I don't love, when I love you? You can't think that right?"

"I know," she said, despairingly. "It all seems to me horribly, fearfully wrong, but it must be right, because it is so hard."

"You are in love with martyrdom, Nadia," he said, sternly; "but you have no right to try to sacrifice me as well as yourself."

"Very well, say that I am in love with martyrdom, then," she answered, dreadingly. "Persuade yourself that I love it better than I do you."

"I have no doubt you do," said Caerleon; "but I have the misfortune to love you better than an utterly unnecessary sacrifice."

"And I," she said, "love you so much that for your sake I can separate myself from you for ever."

"Is that your idea of love?" he asked bitterly, but with something of awe in his voice.

"It is," she answered.

"But, Nadia, this is monstrous!" he cried. "You tell me that you love me, and yet you order me to marry some one else. You must know that this can't be right. Sit down here quietly, and let us talk the thing out. I think you will see that you are cruelly unfair."

"I daresay I should," said Nadia, still standing. "I have not a doubt that you could convince me—make me yield, at any rate, since my own heart is on your side. But you will not. I know you are stronger than I am, and you will not take an ignoble advantage of your strength to make me do a thing which I know to be wrong. Think," as he gazed at her in silence, "how we should feel, if I married you, and our marriage plunged Thracia into misfortunes—if you were forced to abdicate."

"I should do it with a good conscience, and go home happily with you," returned Caerleon, unexpectedly. "If that's all, I'll abdicate now. What do I care for the kingdom? There has been nothing but worry and rumours of trouble since I accepted it, and if it's going to come between you and me, I'll have nothing more to do with it."

"Oh no, no," entreated Nadia, clinging to his arm as he turned to the doorway. "Don't talk like that. Let me believe in you still. You accepted the kingdom because it was right, for the sake of Thracia, and I know you will govern well. Don't let me be disappointed in

you. If I can give you up because it is right, you can give me up. I can bear anything if I know that I can trust you to go on as you have begun."

"What can I do?" broke out Caerleon in his despair. "You try to break my heart, and then you expect me not even to struggle. Nadia, have you no pity? Give me some hope. Say that after a year—two years—any length of time—I may speak to you again. What is a man to do when you bring up his own honour against him?"

"Submit," said Nadia. Caerleon stood silent, his heart struggling wildly against the barriers she had raised between them. It was on the point of his tongue to say, "You have told me you love me, and that's enough. Nothing shall part us." He felt sure that his love must prevail; she had said so herself. But she had appealed to his honour; how could he disappoint her? The struggle was a cruel one, and he turned away from her in silence. She saw her advantage, and went on—

"I know you will let me be proud of you still. I shall always watch what you are doing, and I shall feel glad to think that perhaps I have helped you—a little. And then some day you will meet some one whom it will be right for you to marry, and you will remember that I wished it——"

"Are you trying to drive me mad, Nadia?" he cried, turning upon her fiercely. "If you told me you did not care for me, I could bear it better. But it makes one feel such a fool, when you have told me you love me, to stand back and let you go. How can you expect it of me?"

"Because it is right," she answered, slowly.

"Let me kiss you once, Nadia," he entreated.

"Oh no, no, no!" she almost

shrieked, feeling that her resolution must give way at the touch of his lips. "Keep your kisses for your bride."

"I don't think I have deserved that," he said, bitterly. "Understand once for all, Nadia, that you need not lay the flattering unction to your soul that I shall comfort myself as you intend me to do. I can't marry you against your will, but I won't marry any other woman. Until I met you I thought that I should never marry, and now that you won't have me I know it. It is you or no one, and you will cheerfully sacrifice me——"

"You see that you are well rid of me," said Nadia.

"Nonsense!" cried Caerleon. "I love you more than ever. I can't do without you. Think of the life to which you are condemning me, Nadia. To be alone always, never to be able to get away from the glare and rush of public life, never to have any one to cheer me on. I thought you would have helped me. I thought you would be there to advise me when I could not see my way. You always seem to be sure of the right path at once. Do you think that marrying the Emperor of Scythia's daughter—if I really intended to take the advice you have been giving me to-night—would ever make up for that? I don't want to marry to strengthen my position in Europe. I want a wife who will look at things without fear or favour, and help me to do what is right. Isn't this a mission for you. Tell me, my dearest, is there no chance for me?"

"None," she answered, huskily, the pleading tone of his last words almost destroying her power of speech. "Please, please, say no more. You cannot tell how my heart is longing to say Yes; but I dare not yield. Don't you see that all our lives have been leading up

to this—to the great choice between right and wrong? It is right now to think of the kingdom, and not of ourselves, and so I can be strong to refuse you for your own sake. It is hard for you, I know, but I think it is harder for me. You can stand alone, but I—oh! I could not do it if I was not sure it was right. Never, never think that I did not love you. Please let me go." He loosed her hands, and she drew aside the curtain and passed out, taking one last look at him as he stood motionless with bowed head, then tapped Cyril on the shoulder with her fan. "Will you kindly take me back to my mother, Lord Cyril? She was intending to leave early."

Mr Hicks, when he afterwards related his impressions of that evening, whether in conversation or in the columns of the 'Fifth Avenue Crier,' was wont to remark, with much originality and force, that coming events cast their shadows before them, and that there is no accounting for the sympathetic movements of some minds. This was his way of leading up to the striking fact that while he and Madame O'Malachy were in the midst of a pleasant chat, in which the reputations of various Thracian notabilities suffered rather severely, the lady suddenly broke off in the course of a sentence and sighed deeply. In response to his anxious inquiries, she assured him that she was not ill, but that she felt a presentiment of coming misfortune,— "and at such a time as this," she added, "you, monsieur, as a friend of the family, will be at no loss to understand the subject of my anxiety. You will pardon a mother's weakness, but it is hard to see two young lives wrecked by an obstinate pride. You have watched the course of the attachment—the royal idyl, as I might call it—between the King

and my daughter with interest, and I know you will sympathise with me in my fear lest Nadia, in her sensitive delicacy, should have refused her lover through fear of being supposed to seek his throne."

"And you'll scarcely believe me," Mr Hicks was wont to continue, ignorant that by means of a mirror close to her Madame O'Malachy had noticed Nadia approaching her from the other end of the room, and discerned in an instant that her companion was not Caerleon, "but the words were not out of her mouth when I saw Lord Cyril coming up behind her, with Miss O'Malachy on his arm as white as a sheet, and I knew her mother was right at once. No girl that had just accepted a king ever went about with a face like that."

"Oh, Mr Hicks, do tell!" his enraptured audience would exclaim; and Mr Hicks would go on to detail how Madame O'Malachy had become as white as her daughter on seeing her face, but had said calmly that the heat of the room was too much for Miss Nadia, and they must go home; and how she had turned to him with a look that went to his heart, and whispered, "My kind friend, do this for us. If any one speaks to you of my daughter, let it be known that she has refused his Majesty for the reason I feared."

In fulfilling this parting request Mr Hicks, as a gallant American, and therefore a sworn servant of the fair sex, had spent the remainder of the evening, only pausing to observe the King as he passed through the hall about half an hour later like a man in a dream, on his way back to the palace, under plea of illness. To the watcher who had duly noted at the beginning of the entertainment that "his Majesty looked extremely well, and conversed affably with the different

persons presented to him," the change spoke volumes; but other people were not quite so ready to accept Madame O'Malachy's explanation as he was. More than one of the chaperons with whom he touched on the subject gave it as her opinion that the King had informed Miss O'Malachy that he could not, consistently with his duty to the nation, marry her; and that a harrowing scene had ensued. It was extraordinary how widely it was known in the ballroom that something of the kind had occurred, and Mr Hicks found his duty of impressing Madame O'Malachy's view of the case on his friends to be no sinecure. But he persevered, for he sympathised deeply with her disappointment, and he was also sorry for Nadia, who, as he rightly supposed, would have something to endure from her mother on the way home. "Those outspoken, affectionate women can do an astonishing amount of reproaching when they are worked up," he said to himself; but he never dreamed of the storm of sarcasm and cruel invective under which Nadia was writhing at the time.

The next day found Bellaviste society divided into two parties, one of which accepted Madame O'Malachy's account of the events of the evening before, and believed that an insane pride had driven Nadia to refuse the King; while the other, led by Madame Sertchaieff, and supported by M. Drakovics, held that his Majesty had, more or less directly, declined to marry her. Madame Sertchaieff was the great lady of Bellaviste. As the wife of the Minister for War (the brother of the Ivan Sertchaieff who had been the last Premier of the late king), she took the lead among the ladies of the city, and derived no small honour from the fact that her husband was the only member of

the Ministry whom M. Drakovics treated at all on a footing of equality. With every desire to make the Thracian army invincible, the Premier was handicapped by knowing nothing of military affairs, and since General Sertchaieff had turned his back on his brother and his party to adopt the cause of the revolution, he left all the actual work of the bureau in his hands, and also consulted him frequently on the general policy of the Government. Consequently, when Madame Sertchaieff (it is needless to say that she had not been among the ladies whose eagerness to see Nadia had scandalised the Premier so deeply) averred that she had guessed, from the excitement visible in the King's manner when he danced with her, that he was screwing up his courage to the point of formally breaking off his relations with Miss O'Malachy, and further hinted that the step had been taken by the advice and with the full approval of M. Drakovics, she carried many of her hearers with her. Curiosity was rife as to what would be the next step on either side; but on the evening after the ball the public interest was cruelly balked by the news that the O'Malachy family, with the exception of Louis, had left the city. They were gone because it could not but be disagreeable to Miss O'Malachy to run the risk of meeting her rejected lover constantly, said Mr Hicks and his party; because they had received a secret mandate from the police advising them to depart, said Madame Sertchaieff and her friends; because the O'Malachy and his wife, seeing that there was no opening in Thracia for their peculiar talents, had determined to return to the service of their Scythian employers, thought Cyril.

Had Cyril possessed a conscience in working order, it might have

given him some trouble at this time; but systematic neglect and snubbing had reduced it to a condition in which, while it prevented his full enjoyment of his achievements, it never interfered with him during their performance, nor caused him to wish that they had not succeeded. Like the British matron in "Locksley Hall," he had amassed "a little hoard of maxims," or perhaps it would be more correct to say impressions, during his social career, and these he used as balm whenever his conscience gave him a feeble prick. On the subject of love and marriage these impressions were particularly strong. Every man, Cyril considered, was bound to fall in love a greater or less number of times, and the malady was like the measles, in that some took it slightly and others severely. Marriage was one of the things which were better managed in France. Even as it was, every sensible man with a name and a possible career married with a keen eye to present and future advantage, but this should be arranged for him as soon as he entered public life, in order to avoid wasting time in the unprofitable experiments mentioned above. Marrying for love was a folly which only the rashest of men would commit, for when the love was gone—and in Cyril's scheme of life it was bound to go—where were you? Circumstances had forced him hitherto to acknowledge a possible exception in the case of his brother. It was eminently desirable that Caerleon should marry; but it was equally evident that he would not marry any one who did not take his fancy, and when Nadia appeared Cyril saw no insuperable objection to his pleasing himself. His tastes were simple, and his income, in ordinary years, quite sufficient, so money was not a necessity; and if Nadia was not likely to achieve a success in society,

Caerleon, on his side, was too much of a faddist ever to get on in Parliament, and thus it might be the most suitable thing for them to settle down at Llandiarmid and elevate the peasantry and lead the county. In this roseate view, as Cyril now ruefully perceived, his wonted foresight had been badly at fault, for he ought to have remembered the possible crown, the bestowal of which had since changed everything. Nadia O'Malachy as Queen of Thracia was simply *impossible*, and Caerleon ought to have seen this himself.

"Why, if I had been in his place," thought Cyril, forgetting that their views upon the subject were diametrically opposed, "I would have settled the matter myself, and not thrown it all on the girl."

It was in this view that, after seeing Madame O'Malachy and her daughter to their carriage on the fateful evening, he had returned to his brother, and found him still standing as Nadia had left him.

"Anything up, old man?" he inquired, sympathetically.

"She won't have me," responded Caerleon with difficulty.

"I thought so." Cyril was careful not to assume a tone of superiority, which his brother might have resented under the circumstances. "Well, one doesn't object to a spice of pride in a girl, but this is rather too much. I'm awfully——"

"It was not what you think," Caerleon interrupted quickly. "She refused me because she thought it best—for the kingdom."

"If only Drakovics knew how completely she agreed with him!" murmured Cyril. "But really, you know, Caerleon, such goodness is a little too strong for daily life. It's convenient for the rest of us that there are people like that, though they might be rather overpowering to live with, and all we can do is to profit at their expense."

"If you came here to rot me ——" began Caerleon, angrily.

"I came to fetch you back to the ballroom. People are asking what has become of you."

"Let them ask. You didn't imagine that I intended to dance again to-night?"

"I didn't imagine you meant to stay here. You had better get home. You look seedy enough. I'll end up the business for you."

The offer was thankfully accepted, and it was late when Cyril returned to the palace; but he saw by the lights in Caerleon's rooms that he was still awake, though a knock at the door only produced a mandate from his brother to "go to bed, and let him alone." But Cyril did not sleep that night as soundly as a conscienceless man ought to do, and whenever he awoke he heard Caerleon tramping backwards and forwards through his three rooms.

A SISTER-IN-LAW OF MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS.

"Elle a été belle, sage, vertueuse, bonne, et douce Princesse."—BRANTÔME.

AMONG the many brilliant personages of the sixteenth century, Claude, Princess of France and Duchess of Lorraine, plays a modest part; yet the short story of her life has, we venture to think, a gentle and gracious fragrance of its own,—the fragrance of a pure and earnest nature, which remained unspoiled amid the dangers inseparable from her position at the gayest Courts in Europe, and which by its tender charity to the poor merited for her during her married life the title of "true Mother of her people."¹

Claude, second daughter of Henri II. and Catherine de Médicis, was born at Fontainebleau, November 12, 1546. Another son had been greatly deaired, and the Court was "toute troublée" at the disappointment; but, with all their great faults, the royal parents were singularly devoted to their children, and the little princess was tenderly welcomed, and for three months (a wonderfully long time for the period) remained with her mother. She was baptised on February 9, by the Cardinal de Guise, Archbishop of Rheims, afterwards the famous Cardinal de Lorraine; and was called Claude, in memory of her grandmother, Claude de France, and in honour of the chief of the house of Guise. For political reasons Henri had asked the Swiss cantons, his "bons com-

pères," to be the sponsors; and four delegates were despatched for the occasion by the thirteen cantons, bearing as token of amity a large gold medallion, on which was engraved a hand holding thirteen cords united by one knot and a cross, with the motto, "If God be with us, who can be against us?" The godmothers were Jeanne d'Albret, future mother of Henri IV. and the admirable Duchesse de Guise, Antoinette de Bourbon.

Not long after the ceremony the little Claude was removed to the royal nurseries at St Germain-en-Laye, where the Dauphin and Princess Elizabeth were already established under the charge of M. d'Humyères, governor of the children of France. M. d'Humyères had held this office in the previous reign, and we find the king in constant and intimate communication with his old governor. Thus, on hearing of the princess's safe arrival, March 28, Henri writes:—

"My cousin, I have seen by your letters of the 29th that my daughter Claude had arrived the preceding day in good health at St Germain-en-Laye, where our other children were also in good health. You will give me pleasure by sending me news of them as often as you can during the journey that I am about to undertake on leaving this."²

Madame d'Humyères, who shared her husband's important charge, had, by her devoted care of the

¹ "Si grande était la charité de cette jeune Princesse qu'en tout ce pays de Lorraine elle était tenue pour la vraie Mère du peuple."—A. Sorbin, *Oraison Funèbre*.

² Henri II. à Mons. d'Humyères, 31 Mars 1547. Bib. Nat., France.

children, acquired the entire confidence of the king and queen. Two other ladies assisted her, and the most celebrated of the Court doctors, Gouvrot and Chrétien, watched daily over the children's health. No doubt news of his family was constantly forwarded to the king during his celebrated progress into Piedmont, and it is pleasing to learn that, at the end of about six months, Henri,

"weary of all these festivities, and more desirous of seeing his children again than of prolonging his triumphs, quitted it all, and, starting almost alone, never stopped till he reached St Germain. This king, who has been described as so cold and taciturn, could not 'patienter' a few days longer, but 'went off in great devotion to see Messieurs his children and enjoy them all to himself.'"¹

During the king's absence the little Court of St Germain was augmented by the arrival of two children of the family of Count Galeotto Pica della Mirandola, who had just ceded his principality to France. Three months later a much more important addition was made to the youthful company in the person of the Queen of Scots, already, as we know, affianced to the Dauphin. After her perilous voyage from Scotland, Mary Stuart, accompanied by her Maries, reached this happy haven early in October 1548. Every effort had been made to welcome and honour her. The king settled each detail himself, and had written letter upon letter to M. d'Humyères regarding the arrangement of the palace and the etiquette to be observed:—

"As regards what you ask me," he

writes, "concerning the rank which I desire my said daughter, the Queen of Scots, to hold, I wish to say that I intend that she shall walk *before my daughters*, as the marriage between her and my son is quite settled; and even without that she is a crowned queen, and as such I wish her to be served and honoured."²

The rooms to be prepared for Mary and his own children are designated by the king as "the saloons and chambers above those of the king, as well as those above the rooms of the queen, the King of Navarre, and the Constable." In spite of all these elaborate arrangements for their comfort at St Germain, the royal children seem to have made frequent moves to Blois, to Amboise, to Carrières, or to Maison whenever the fear of "bad air" caused a flight to the north or south.

In 1549, when the queen went to Rheims for her coronation, the little Court was left at St Germain. In 1551 we find it established at Blois; and here Lord Northampton (sent by Edward VI. to bear the Garter to King Henri) paid it a visit, of which his official report gives us an agreeable glimpse:—

"When he reached Blois, Mandose invited him to visit the king's children. . . . Next morning, horses being sent for him and his company, they rode to the castle, where they were received by the governor with great ceremony; and being brought to the Dauphin's presence, were embraced of him, the Duke of Orleans, and the two young ladies their sisters, as amiably as could be imagined."³

A few days later Lord Northampton made a formal demand for the hand of Mary Stuart on behalf of

¹ Claude de Lorraine, by M. de Magnienville, p. 27.

² Henri II. à Mons. d'Humyères.

³ The Marquis of Northampton to the Council, June 16, 1551. Nantes. Cal. State Papers.

his royal master, to which the little queen, who was present, and who had already learned to love her future husband, herself returned a hearty negative.¹

"It was beautiful to see this little Court," writes a contemporary, "placed apart and generally established at St Germain, which was, moreover, a true school of good manners and chivalrous exercises, especially after Monseigneur the Dauphin and these young nobles began to grow up, when they had masters to teach dancing and shooting, without counting their other studies of belles-lettres, music, mathematics, painting, and engineering, and other similar sciences, suitable for such scholars."

There appear to have been, besides, three gentlemen attendant on the Dauphin, who trained the young people "in intellectual attainments, in constant cheerfulness, and honest recreations."² The recreations, we are glad to find, played an important part. Either in the beautiful park, or in the spacious halls and corridors of the palace, there were mimic fights and tournaments, scenes acted from the romances of chivalry, and other pastimes. Among the latter, we may conjecture that "the hackneys sent to the Dauphin by Governor Lord Arran" figured frequently—the hackneys being, we suppose, Highland or Shetland ponies. We are inclined to agree with Madame Claude's biographer, who thinks that these children, all destined to bear a crown, managed to amuse themselves very well.

Amid all these duties and pleasures, however, sorrow more

than once visited the little circle. When Claude was four years old her young brother, the Duke of Orleans, died. Some years later, in 1549, Princess Elizabeth, always delicate, was very ill of the measles, and in the following spring Claude herself was seriously indisposed—an illness which elicited anxious letters from the king and queen. The little patient recovered slowly, and had to be sent to Amboise, with her brother and sister, for change of air. The political events of the year 1551 were destined to have a lasting effect on the life of our little princess, by bringing to the French Court her future husband, Charles III., Duke of Lorraine, Son of the late Duke Francis and his wife, Christina of Denmark.³ Charles was a mere child when, as the result of the campaign known as that of "*Les trois Évêchés*," Henri II. took possession of the Duchy of Lorraine. Christina endeavoured to place her son and his inheritance under Henri's protection; but his plans were fixed, and, while showing her every courtesy, he expressed his determination of taking Charles to be educated under his own eye and of marrying him to his daughter. The young Duke accordingly made his appearance at Fontainebleau, for his advanced age of nine seems to have admitted him at once to actual Court life, and we do not hear of him as joining the youthful circle at St Germain, nor do we learn when or where he first saw his future bride. The impression made by Charles at this

¹ Northampton to Cecil. State Papers, MS.

² Vie de Philippe de Stozzi. Bib. Nat.

³ Christina was the daughter of Christian II. of Denmark, niece of Charles V., and widow of Francis Sforza, Duke of Milan. During her widowhood her hand was sought by Henry VIII., but she promptly refused him, and in 1541 married Francis, Duke of Lorraine. A beautiful full-length portrait of this lady by Holbein is in the possession of the Duke of Norfolk.

time was "all that was favourable," a verdict which proved true also of his after-life.

Two years later Claude began to take her part in Court life, under her mother's wing. In a letter from the Cardinal de Lorraine to the Queen-Dowager of Scotland he says :—

"The queen takes with her her two daughters; she will give them no household, having decided to let them sleep in her dressing-closet, or in some room as close to hers as possible. They will have with them only Mme. d'Humyères and their waiting-maids, and the said lady declares that as long as she lives no one but herself shall have authority over her daughters until they are married."¹

Claude was six years old, and her education was now, it seems, to begin in earnest. Her special companions were her sister Elizabeth and the young Queen of Scots.² Mme. Claude's biographer describes very charmingly the friendship which united them, and which was to continue in after-years. Queen Mary appears to have led the way in study and accomplishments, and quaint examples of the zeal with which she assisted her little friends still exist in a copy-book discovered some years ago at the Bibliothèque Nationale.

"It is not without cause, my dear sisters," writes Mary, "that the queen ordered us yesterday to do what our governesses tell us; for Cicero says in the second book of *De Legibus*, he who knows how to command has once obeyed, and he who obeys simply is worthy of one day commanding."

On another occasion, addressing

herself to Elizabeth, who was nearer her own age than little Claude, Mary says :—

"When, yesterday evening, my tutor begged you to reprove your sister because she wished to rise to take a drink, you replied that you did not dare do so, as you wished yourself to drink. See then, my sister, what we should be, who are examples to the people. How could we dare reprove them, unless we ourselves are without reproach?"

The princesses had as their master in poetry Ronsard, who writes thus of the daughters of his king :—

"Qui dessous leur mère croissent
Ainsi que trois arbrisseaux
Déjà grandes apparaissent
Comme trois beaux Lys
À la fraîcheur des ruisseaux."

And again, to stimulate their zeal for study :—

"Mais que sert d'être les filles
D'un grand Roi si vous tenez
Les muses comme inutile
Et leurs science gentille
Dès le berceau n'apprenez."

That Mary Stuart profited by Ronsard's lessons we know well; but although the French princesses did not compose verses, we learn that, in the poet's opinion, Claude was already distinguished by her artistic sense and her taste for drawing and combining colours.

Thus another six years passed until 1558, when the first break was made in the happy circle by the marriage of Mary to the Dauphin. During the great festivities which accompanied it, we catch pleasant glimpses of Princess Claude and her *fiancé*. Thus, on

¹ Cardinal de Lorraine to Mary of Guise, February 22, 1553. Labanoff, vol. i.

² Although Mary shared many of the studies and amusements of the royal children of France, she owed the most important part of her education to the watchful care of her admirable grandmother, Antoinette de Bourbon, Duchess-Dowager of Guise.

the day of betrothal we see that in the State quadrille Duke Charles and she danced together. On the wedding-day Charles led her out again to dance, dressed in cloth-of-gold covered with jewels; and at the pageant that same evening he entered the royal presence with five other princes in ships with silver masts and sails of silver gauze, and, capturing Princess Claude, carried her off in his vessel.

A year later, and Charles and Claude were the centre figures in equally gorgeous festivities. France was tired of war, and even of victories, and Claude's marriage, as well as the projected alliance of her sister with Philip II., was to cement the peace with Spain. Charles's mother, Duchess Christina, was the person chosen to intervene between the two Powers. Since her son's removal to France she had lived in voluntary retirement, and was now in Flanders, "desiring passionately," as Claude's biographer says, to see her son once more. This happiness was now offered to her on the condition that she would use her influence with the Spanish Ministers. The negotiations were successful, and at Christina's suggestion the French and Spanish plenipotentiaries met at Câteau-Cambrésis, and by the first days of April 1559 the duchess was able to write her congratulations to the King of France on the conclusion of peace.

On the 19th of January the contract of marriage between the Duke Charles and Princess Claude had been signed at the Louvre in presence of the king and queen, the Dauphin, the Children of France, the Cardinal de Lorraine, and many other royal and noble personages. The dowry of the princess was fixed at 300,000 gold "écus soleil," to be paid in the

space of three years. After the Treaty of Câteau-Cambrésis, the town of Stenay was added to her portion. Of the wonderful *trousseau* details are preserved in the papers of L'Aubespine, and, as we can imagine, it was worthy of the bride. Dresses of cloth of gold and silver, of satin and velvet in all colours, jewels, a mantle *à la royale*, and another—seemingly a dressing-gown—of silver cloth, all lined with wolf-fur, figure in the list, as well as hangings for rooms in *toile d'or damassé*, and cramoisy velvet, &c., solid silver table and toilet services, house linen, litters, carriages, and horses, with cloth of silver harness.

On January 22d, three days after the contract was signed, the marriage took place. At eight o'clock in the morning the "Court of Parliament," in scarlet robes and furred caps, preceded by pursuivants and followed by the royal notaries, proceeded to the cathedral of Notre Dame. They were soon followed by other civil dignitaries, who all took their place in the choir. The body of the great church was crowded with "nobles, gentlemen, noble ladies, and demoiselles," while the porch and square outside as well as the streets were filled to overflowing with well-dressed citizens.

At eleven o'clock the royal procession started from the episcopal palace, and crossing a long gallery erected for the purpose in full view of the people, advanced to the platform at the cathedral door: here, as at the Dauphin's wedding, the marriage ceremony took place, the Cardinal de Lorraine officiating. The herald scattered money to the people's cry of largesse, and then the procession passed into the church, the king leading the young duchess. They were followed by

the Cardinal de Trivulce, the papal legate, the Cardinals of Lorraine, Bourbon, and Guise, by several archbishops and bishops, five hundred gentlemen of the king's household, and a brilliant crowd of royal personages and nobles.

After the nuptial Mass the Court again returned to the episcopal palace till four o'clock, when the brilliant assemblage proceeded through the streets, hung with tapestry and decked with flowers, to the great hall of the palace for the nuptial feast. This was followed by dances and pageants as usual, and for several days Paris kept holiday. The Princes of Lorraine kept open house, a tournament took place in front of the grand residence of the Duke of Guise, and "many other things exquisite or of mark" were done on this joyful occasion.¹

This is the moment of her history in which Claude's biographer endeavours to describe her personal appearance, and with him we regret that the artists who portray her seem to have been very unsuccessful. Neither the picture preserved at Munich, nor the coin bearing Claude's effigy as Duchess of Lorraine, give us any idea of the princess with the "ivory complexion and limpid eyes," or again the "visage avec une certaine gaieté," which Brantôme describes. He adds that in beauty she resembled her mother, and in goodness and knowledge her aunt Margaret of Valois.

Soon after their marriage Charles and Claude made a little journey to visit the Duchess Christina. The wish of the latter to see her

son does not appear to have been realised till now, when he took his young bride to greet her at Mons. Here Claude was also introduced to her powerful cousin and future brother-in-law, Philip of Spain. In the midst of the peace negotiations which occupied him, Philip treated his guests right royally, and they returned laden with gifts. On their return to the French Court, some months were passed in further festivities, which were occasioned by the proclamation of peace and the marriages of Princess Elizabeth and the Duchess de Berri. But France was soon to mourn instead of rejoice. On the 29th of June 1559 the king received his death-wound, and a few days later breathed his last. On our princess—only now thirteen—the blow of losing so tender a father must have fallen heavily, while the sorrow of leaving her mother in her grief, and the separation from her sisters, must all have added to the usual pain felt on leaving home and country; but the time had come for Charles to return to his dukedom. As soon as the king's funeral was over, the young pair set out to accompany Francis II. to Rheims for his coronation, from whence to proceed to Lorraine. In those days royal progresses were slow, and in this case the journey was prolonged by an indisposition of the young Queen of Spain, which kept the Court at Villers-Cotterets. At last, on September 15, the *cortège* reached Rheims, and the king and queen, and Elizabeth of Spain, made their State entry.

On the 18th the ceremony took

¹ In the gallery of the Arazzi at Florence may be seen a fine piece of tapestry representing one of these festive scenes. A tournament is depicted within a framework of flowers and fruit. On one side we see Princess Claude, on the other Catherine and her Court, while Duke Charles occupies the centre on horseback.

place, of which the Spanish ambassador gives the following graphic little account.

"The coronation of the very Christian king took place yesterday very solemnly," he writes. "The queen our mistress and the Queen of France, with the Duchesses of Savoy and of Lorraine, were on the platform erected for them, and near them was Monseigneur the Duke of Savoy. Tomorrow the king leaves for Saint Marcoul, and from there he is to take the road to Bar-le-Duc."¹

Political reasons were assigned for this journey of the Court to Lorraine; but the affection which united the young king and queen to Charles and Claude appears to have been the real motive. At Bar, before separating from his sister and brother-in-law, Francis admitted Charles to the Order of the Knights of St Michael on Michaelmas-day, and formally recognised his suzerainty over the Barrais.

The duke and duchess now proceeded to their capital of Nancy, where everything was ready for their solemn entry. It appears, however, that, educated as he had been at the Court of France, an absolute monarchy, Charles was not as yet prepared to meet the wishes of his nobles, and to give the usual pledges required of a Duke of Lorraine on his accession—the promise of respecting their privileges and confirming their prerogatives; and for this reason he eluded the formal ceremonial, and brought his duchess quietly into the town, from whence they shortly went on to the famous Abbey of Remiremont. Here he willingly performed a duty also required of him—that of vowing, in the presence of the abbess, and with his hands clasped on the shrine of

St Romaric, to respect for ever the privileges of the canonesses of the monastery. After this ceremony Charles and Claude returned to Nancy, and confiding the care of the duchy to Duchess Christina they once more joined the Court of France. And it was only after another two years had passed that they entered upon the government of the duchy.

In the autumn of 1560, then, Charles and Claude commenced their new life and duties. The medal struck of Charles in the same year represents him as a handsome man in the prime of life, with high forehead, straight nose, and martial and dignified air. His qualities as a ruler were of a high order, to which the events of his exceptionally long reign bear witness. A fervent Catholic, his efforts were at first chiefly directed to preventing the spread of heresy in his domain; and although free from the spirit of cruelty of his age, and an enemy to violent measures, he established a sort of cordon on the frontiers of Lorraine, forbidding the entry into the duchy of any persons affecting the new opinions, and to meet the danger on its own ground, he founded the University of Pont-à-Mousson. "A legislator and administrator, loved and admired by his people, . . . prudent, affable, and, when required, of an unbounded generosity." Such was the man to whom Claude owed fifteen years of peace and happiness. Faithful to his motto, "*Pax amor æqua fides*," Charles seems to have surrounded his wife with constant marks of his affection. The old account-books of the Treasury of Lorraine still bear witness to this by entries such as these—"a golden ornament," or "piece

¹ Perrenot de Chantonay to the Duchess of Parma, September 19, 1559.

of precious stuffs that M. le Duc gave to madame" on his return from short absences, or on the births of the children; and again, sums of money given to the bearers of letters from the duchess to Charles, if he was absent even for a few days.

The household of his wife was established on a footing of great splendour by Charles. Claude had eight ladies of honour—among whom we are glad to find her old friend Mme. d'Humyères—and also eight young *demoiselles d'honneur*. To these were added three *maitres d'hôtel*, three equerries, and many others, also two chaplains. The duke's household was on a still greater scale, and in festivities and pastimes the Court of Lorraine seems to have closely followed the example of that of France, although in this instance the gay doings were tempered, we may suppose, by the simple and domestic tastes of Charles and Claude.

It is impossible to follow our duchess in her daily life as we would wish. With her biographer we lament over those archives at Nancy, "so well classified, yet so niggardly of details." It is provoking to find bare mention of a "brilliant feast," a royal visit, or a journey made by Claude, and to be unable to follow her. Her own letters and the history of her times help us a little, however, and the simple records of her charities—of her gifts to the Church or the poor, her alms each time she goes to church, &c., &c.,—all show us her pious, gentle nature, and help us to understand the influence she exercised around her. "Truly," says Brantôme, "all who had to do with her found nothing but courtesy, gentleness, and goodness."

Claude was hardly established in the Palace of Nancy when she received a visit from Count Herbertstein, sent by her uncle the Emperor Ferdinand to congratulate her upon her accession. In return Claude sent a long letter "in her best writing" to the Emperor, still preserved in the archives at Vienna. This letter, dated from Saint Mihiel, January 1, 1560 (old style), is indorsed, "Received, January 25th." Communication was difficult in those days, and the Emperor little knew that his congratulations should more truly have been condolences. On December 5 a great sorrow had befallen France and Lorraine in the early death of Francis II. The illness had been too rapid for Claude to be with her brother; but the sorrow of his loss affected her health, and her mother wrote, anxiously inquiring about her, to the Duchess-Dowager of Guise. Grief, and possibly uneasiness as to the future—for who could say whether the young king would be as favourable to Lorraine as his brother had been—were the causes of Claude's indisposition: she was, however, able to accompany her husband early in the following year to Rheims for the new coronation.

"Your sister of Lorraine will come to see me at Rheims," writes Catherine to the Queen of Spain. "I know not who told such untruths as to say that I paid no attention to her and to her husband, for as it happens, she has had news oftener of me and of her brother since the death of her [brother] than she had had before. . . . I am her mother, and yours, who will let you always know that there is no one who loves you nearly as much as I do."¹

Charles IX. was crowned on May 15, 1561. The same cere-

¹ Catherine de Médicis à la Reine d'Espagne May 1561.
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monial which had been observed for Francis II. was exactly followed. At the conclusion the Duke and Duchess of Lorraine accompanied the king to Marchais before returning to Lorraine. As soon as they were at home again, they received a visit from the widowed Mary of Scotland. Mary had spent the sad winter at Rheims with her aunt Renée of Lorraine, the Abbess of the convent of Saint Pierre-les-Dames. In this abbey was buried the heart of Mary of Guise, also lately deceased, and it was here that the young queen took refuge "to mourn for the double loss she had sustained in the short space of six months."

Charles and his mother, and many nobles and ladies, met Mary at the frontier. At Nancy Claude welcomed her with affection and honour, and here a great entertainment was prepared for the poor queen, and all the ordinance of Nancy, great and small, was fired in her honour! "The Queen of Scotland," writes Throckmorton, "was accompanied at Nancy with the Dowager of Lorraine, whom they call there 'Son Altezze,' the Duke and Duchess of Lorraine, M. de Vaudemont, the Cardinal of Guise, and the Duc d'Aumale." The good Lorrainers were filled with sympathy for one with whom they had formerly rejoiced in her days of happiness, and whom they now admired more than ever in her white mourning.

Claude endeavoured to console and cheer her sister-in-law by every sort of festivity, including Mary's old favourite pastime of

hunting; but the spirits of the latter were unequal to these kind entertainments, and she fell sick of the tertian ague. Mary's grandmother, the Dowager-Duchess of Guise, hearing she was ill, hastened to Nancy "with goodly speed," to use Bishop Lesly's words, "and caused the Queen to be carried therefrom by easy journeys to Joinville, affirming, by long experience, nothing to be better for the relief of that sickness than easy travel and changing of the air."¹

Mary and Claude never met again, nor have we been able to discover any of the letters which probably passed between them in the years that followed.² This visit to Lorraine brought about the introduction of the art of straw-plaiting into the United Kingdom. Mary, seeing the utility of the work, persuaded a company of Lorrainers to return with her to Scotland, from whence, many years later, they were introduced into England by James VI., and established at Luton in Bedfordshire.

The next year, 1562, was marked by Claude's long-deferred solemn entry into Nancy. Charles had sought in vain to evade giving the pledges which the Lorraine nobles desired; but the question became serious, the nobles declared an intention of refusing subsidies to their duke, and Charles was therefore forced to yield. He pronounced the usual form of words, but at the same time he had a document drawn up protesting against the kind of violence he had been subjected to. This paper, still preserved at Nancy,

¹ Hist. of Scotland, Lesly, pp. 295, 296.

² One little memento of the friendship which united Mary and Claude exists in the following note from a list of accounts: "À Jacques l'Anglois, peintre de Madame la Princesse de Lorraine, trente-huit francs pour une peinture de la Reine d'Ecosse qu'il a faite du commandement de S.A. étant alors à Paris."

was happily never afterwards required by the good duke.

In the autumn Charles went to assist at the coronation of Maximilien as King of the Romans, which took place at Frankfort on Christmas Eve. In reference to this ceremony, we may quote an old Lorraine proverb, which places such a function with "the coronation of a king of France at Rheims, and the funeral of a duke of Lorraine at Nancy," as among the finest ceremonies of Europe. Claude remained at home on this occasion, and for the first time acted as regent. Touching her exercise of these new duties, we have Brantôme's words of approval. He tells us the duchess had "a good intelligence and wit, which she always showed by wisely and prudently seconding her husband in the government of his lordships and dominions."

On the 8th of November 1563 Claude's first child was born, an event which caused universal rejoicing. Letters of congratulation flowed in, and the archives contain many references to the occasion, and especially to the christening. The King of France and the Ambassador of Spain were the god-parents. "On May 7th the King of France, called Charles, came to Bar with a large Court to hold the Marquis, son of Monseigneur of Lorraine, in the holy fonts of baptism. . . . He was called Charles. There was made a great and marvelous feast, during the space of ten or twelve days." The child's title was Marquis du Pont, which — owing to his father's long reign — he bore for forty-five years. This was the first of nine children, and Claude's life was in future divided between her duty to her little ones and the obligations of her position. When her health permitted, she

always accompanied her husband to the different ducal residences — Lunéville, Charmes, &c.—or to visit their intimate friends, such as the Count of Vaudemont, or the Guises. At Condé, the residence of the latter, the child marquis was evidently with his parents, as his little desk and stool are mentioned as part of the furniture.

Grave and sorrowful events affecting her family took place during the years following, and we have glimpses of the share taken by Claude in these trials. For instance, when the news of the assassination of the Duke of Guise reached Lorraine, and the deepest feelings of indignation were roused in the country, Claude's sorrowful letter to her mother shows how rightly she had judged of the blow which had fallen on "her house" of Lorraine. "I think," she writes, "that they will *never* forget it," and she begs for justice on the "*unhappy* and wicked ones who have been the cause." Charles and Claude were at Paris during the Massacre of St Bartholomew, that terrible event wrought by the wicked policy of her mother and brother; and the following passages from an account of the occurrence, written by Claude's sister, Margaret of Valois, show us the suffering of the sisters on that sad night. Margaret, who had been married barely a week to Henry of Navarre, knew nothing of the plan. On the evening of August 23d she and Claude were sitting with their mother, when Catherine told her to retire. When "as I made my curtesy," Margaret says, "my sister took me by the arm and stopped me; weeping bitterly, she said to me, 'My God! my sister, do not go there.'" Catherine bade her be silent, and repeated the order. Claude again interceded for her sister, saying, "There is no

reason for sending her to be sacrificed like that; no doubt if *they* discover anything, *they* will avenge themselves" (evidently Claude had been made to believe in the existence of a plot). The discussion continued; but at last, writes Margaret, "my sister, bursting into tears, bade me good night without daring to say more, and I went away in fear and trembling."

In 1568 a sorrow of a very different kind had fallen on Claude, in the death of her sister the Queen of Spain. On hearing of this loss, Claude wrote to her mother to console her.

"Madame," she writes, "having seen by the letter of your majesty the extreme loss I have sustained by the death of the queen my sister, which is so great a grief to me that if it was not for the consolation I receive from your Majesty, and your orders, which I endeavour to obey as well as I can, it would be very difficult for me to get through these days, knowing the loss also which it is to his Majesty the king, and to his kingdom," &c.

Among Claude's letters there is another, written in a lighter vein, to her young cousin the Duchess of Guise, which, in its simple, easy style, might have been written to-day. It ends thus:—

"There, that is all our little news. I beg of you to write me yours in the same intimate way, and I assure you you will never show your affection to any one who loves you more than I do. Let me hear when you go to Joinville, as we are going to Bar, which is only seven short leagues from there; and now I kiss your hands a hundred thousand times as well as your good husband's, and I pray God to give happiness to a life

already so blessed, though not even yet as happy as desires your entirely affectionate good cousin,

"CLAUDE DE F."

We have perhaps lingered too long over these scanty records of Claude's short life. The end came quickly, and, four years after her sister's death, Claude died at the early age of twenty-nine. One day of November 1574 couriers were sent in all directions to summon Duke Charles, who was absent. Claude had given birth to twin daughters, and was in great danger. The most celebrated doctors were called to her sick-bed, but she daily grew worse: the illness lasted till February. On the 6th of that month she wrote her last will, a document which bears testimony to her deep religious faith and tender thought of others. A few days later—on February 25—Claude breathed her last. France and Lorraine mourned her death; and, as Brantôme tells us, her husband so lamented her that, although he survived her for thirty years, he would not remarry, saying "he would never find her equal, although," he adds quaintly, "if he did, he would marry again."

The funeral service was worthy of her whom the people of Lorraine called their "Mother," and Claude was laid to rest in the Collegiate Church of St George at Nancy, where her husband also was buried in later years.

In our days a marble slab in the ducal palace at Nancy still commemorates this young duchess, who, "by the royal splendour of her acts, enhanced the august title of 'Most Christian.'"

ENGLISH OFFICERS AND SOLDIERS—AS THEY WILL BE.

A FORECAST.

SIR WILLIAM NAPIER'S statement that "a wise policy does not consist in pushing any one point to the utmost perfection of which it may be susceptible, but in regulating and balancing opposing interests in such a manner that the greatest benefit shall arise from the working of the whole," is peculiarly applicable to the present phase of army administration, when the public are eagerly watching what changes will be initiated by the new military rulers who have been substituted for the old. The school of thirty-five years ago denounces dangerous enterprise; the modern school protests against putrefying inactivity; and a third section applies Victor Hugo's simile of rancid perfume to the perpetuation of once honoured but subsequently out-of-date institutions. "I was formerly the rose," pleads the perfume, to which the pitiless answer must be, "Yes—formerly." I have endeavoured to prove in my former papers¹ the increased efficiency of our officers and of our rank and file, resulting from many years' persistence in the path of progress; I have tried to show that the English army—constantly absurdly underrated in foreign countries, and intermittently belittled in its own—possesses a *personnel* in a high state of excellence; and now, while carefully avoiding criticising the action of my military superiors, or wearying my readers by nibbling at details, I will seek to forecast the further ameliorations to be expected from

a continuance of wise men's reformatory toil, which has ever been the sport of fools.

Our foremost subject of exultation is founded on the intimation conveyed by the Secretary of State for War, that much of the responsibility hitherto concentrated under one head will be split up and assigned to auxiliaries. We may, therefore, anticipate that each general will be empowered to adjudicate on various details within his command, formerly referred to the Horse Guards. For instance, he will perhaps be permitted on his own responsibility to order the discharge of characters so undoubtedly scoundrelly as to be qualified for residence at Wormwood Scrubs, or of patients whom he has ascertained, by personal inspection, to be so manifestly in the final stage of decline that even residence in Madeira would not prolong life for a couple of months; or he may transfer a recruit from one regiment to another; or he may allow Lieutenant Smith to spend a week at Ostend or Calais; or he may even give orders for casting a troop horse so crippled as to be unfit for a costermonger's cart,—all without documentary consultation with the Commander-in-Chief. Similar increased powers, though in a descending ratio, will doubtless be delegated to commanding officers. This latitude of action will inevitably carry with it the further advantage of abrogating much of the clerical work which may be described as now of terri-

¹ See 'Blackwood's Magazine,' October and December 1895.

fyng proportions. Lord Wolseley in his 'Soldier's Pocket-Book' (pp. 135, 136) himself comments on the "absurdity" of certain features, on "the twaddle that can be dispensed with," and on "the complicated returns" in which we "revel," and these strictures will come forcibly home to every one who has had experience in military offices. Returns in duplicate, in triplicate, and even in quadruplicate, sent in monthly, weekly, daily; columns of figures like a book of logarithms; arrays of names like a Post-office Directory—all remarkable for their valueless accuracy—are accumulated in the orderly-rooms, are pigeon-holed at the headquarters of districts, are furnished to the headquarters of the army; and we venture respectfully to sympathise with our central administrators, who, having long ago arrived at the conclusion that the weariness of the perusal of these documents would be intolerable, have at length discovered that their disposal in recondite corners is cumbrous. Commanding officers will rejoice at being relieved of some of the functions of a superintending counting-house clerk, and at the further time at their disposal for soldiering, pure and simple; and they will appreciate the release, for regimental duty, of many of their best non-commissioned officers, formerly employed in copying correspondence which should never have been started, which could with difficulty be traced when needed, but which never by any chance is needed. The late Mr Thomas White, the universal provider of Aldershot, and an illustrious representative of English trade, in confiding to me part of the history of his success stated: "My entire system was based on that admirable model of organisation, an English regiment. Only

I stopped short at the redundancy of your clerical work. Your incessant duplications and checkings are preposterously superfluous, and would eat up half the profits of a tradesman through the multiplicity of clerks." It may be suggested that checking beyond a certain point entails the very inaccuracies it is intended to prevent. Through a rather flagrant error of the War Office I was once paid staff pay twice over. With the heavy heart which sometimes accompanies even actions of elementary honesty, I wrote to the War Office clerks, traditionally honoured by their perfection of checking, pointing out the necessity that I should refund. The culprits purged themselves of their offence by sending me, who had rectified it, an illogical rebuke to the effect that "the error of overpayment would be overlooked on this occasion, but I must not do so again"!

The next reform probably impending is the enforcement of economical regulations whereby officers will be enabled to live, according to their proper status, not entirely on their professional income, but with an inconsiderable supplement thereto. Thus they will be relieved from the alternatives of the obloquy of poverty, selfish demands on their parents' means, or the dishonourable career of the desperate spendthrift who, never intending to pay, cares not by what means he supplies his immediate desires. "We are sick of this cry; we have legislated for economy over and over again, and nothing further herein can be effected," may be the angry commentary of some masters of the art of saying everything and doing nothing, of those whose hearts are cold for reform, and whose minds are narrow for improvement. "The evils indicated can be successfully

combated, have been so combated, and will be so combated again," is the reply of others who refuse to be arrested by artificial obstacles, and who maintain the distinction between parrot-like assertion and demonstration substantiated by facts. Many years ago I was appealed to by my colonel to assist him in reducing preposterously high mess-bills at a large and expensive home station. *Carte blanche* was given me, with the sole proviso that the credit of the establishment was to be maintained. The result was that the average £15 monthly mess-bill, charged even to the most frugal subaltern, was reduced at once to £10, and in other respects the success of our efforts was such as to now enable me to write with certainty on the practicability of surmounting similar difficulties, adding just sufficient detail to make my statements clear.

Within the last few years a lieutenant-colonel of artillery addressed his officers to the following effect: "I have noticed of late duns hanging about the barrack precincts with discreditable frequency, and I have even received menacing letters from tradespeople claiming my assistance to compel some of my officers to pay outstanding bills. It is now my duty to put a stop to a disrepute which has become public. Many of you subalterns are 'hard up' by reason of immoderately high mess-bills, and in dealing with this evil I not only require your obedience—I invoke your hearty and cheerful co-operation." The course then pursued was as follows: An officer was detailed for a tour of three or four months' duty as mess-manager, and with functions far more comprehensive than those usually assigned to a mess secretary. Every morning he visited the

kitchen and servants' offices, scanned the bill of fare proposed for the next twenty-four hours, and checked the usual squandering of provisions upon a superfluous horde of fatigue-men. He put a stop to all unnecessary expenses, and supervised all dealings with tradesmen, who were forbidden, upon pain of loss of custom, to supply goods except on requisition signed by himself, and whom he personally paid once a-month. After this system had been brought into thorough working order, these multifarious duties, which at first sight would seem to necessitate incessant labour, were performed with an efficient speed attainable only by military organisation, and involved an average expenditure of time not exceeding forty-five minutes daily. In the final result the mess-bills were reduced to the important extent of 33 per cent, the cuisine was notably improved, guests were as freely entertained as before and with more credit to the mess, all-round efficiency and comfort were materially increased, — and duns were silenced. It may be added that the mess-manager was not struck off the roster of orderly officers; but he was relieved as far as possible from further subsidiary duties, leave was granted to him with lavish liberality, and his commanding officer made a point of recognising his efforts by treating him with marked friendliness and confidence.

A few colonels, chiefly those who talk a great deal of "keeping up the credit of the regiment," and do nothing to maintain the financial honour and repute of its component members, may aggressively argue, "All this clamour of success is quite unwarranted. The system you have been belauding as a novelty has in several

instances been existent in outline for years." Yes—in theory, not in practice. Where that flagrant source of immoderate mess-bills—a messman contractor—has been abolished, he has been merely replaced by the happy-go-lucky administration of a committee and secretary, who have exerted themselves little to check items of current expense, and have cared still less.

On another occasion the same lieutenant-colonel, when inspecting a battery at a foreign out-station, was made aware that some of the officers were suffering under a severe stress of impecuniosity. At the same time he observed, when he officially examined their mess accounts, that the wine-bills had not been paid with the punctuality which is strictly required by the rules of the service, and were posterously high, to a great extent due to the lavish supply of expensive champagne to an incessant influx of civilian guests. "I am sure you will not attribute to me a tyrannical prying into your private circumstances," said the colonel, "when I suggest to you that not one of you can afford this expense. I sympathise with your anxiety not to appear chary of hospitality, and I purpose helping you out of your difficulty by the exercise of the power vested in me as your commanding officer. I shall therefore issue, confidentially, an order that champagne is not to be placed on the mess-table except on the regulated guest-nights. Should a friend chance to dine with you on any other occasion, you are quite at liberty to apologise for not giving him champagne owing to the restrictions of your high-handed colonel." As the latter was on the most friendly terms possible with every one of the officers, they abstained from stigmatising him

while they utilised the excuse; it is certain that the expedient was thoroughly successful, and that the wine-bills dropped down to a virtuous figure. The sequel to this trivial incident is not, perhaps, entirely without interest. In due course the colonel stated to his superior the steps he had taken, and was met by the sharp and adverse criticism, "You can't do that; you have exceeded your powers." "Very well, sir," was the reply, "give me an order to cancel my prohibition, and I assure you that, in obeying you, I will not harbour one thought of vexation." But to counter-order a measure which effectually dealt with an undoubted evil was too great a gulp, and the colonel was allowed his successful way. Had the matter been referred to a still higher source, it is questionable whether any military authority would have dared to decide in opposition to the certainty of civilian public opinion.

The Queen's Regulations declare not only that mess expenses should be limited, but that extravagant entertainments should be discountenanced, and we gratefully anticipate that increased vigilance will be enjoined in ensuring that these precepts are obeyed in spirit as well as in letter. Hitherto, however, the injunction has, in many cases, received the same amount of practical observance as that assigned to sententious precepts at the head of children's copy-books. In one case with which I was acquainted, the mess-bills were sent direct to, and charged through, the regimental agents, so that the officers were not necessarily aware of their respective amounts until they received their pass-books from their bankers. A prominent feature in an expensive station is the charge for mess-guests. Whole-

sale invitations to dinner by respective corps are virtuously forbidden; but the virtue of traditional hospitality is viciously exercised by individuals combining to invite individuals to ceremonious and elaborate dinners equally tedious to givers and recipients. About 1881, at Aldershot, an order was issued to messes, requiring the prior sanction of the assistant-adjutant-general to dinner entertainments of a comprehensive nature. The consequent reduction of mess-bills was of a most satisfactory nature; but by degrees the artillery observed that they were left in an invidious position, inasmuch as other corps were, *sub rosa*, ignoring the prohibition. I was thereupon called on, as brigademajor, to inquire whether the injunction had been cancelled; and the assistant-adjutant-general—distinguished for his tact and efficiency—was compelled to reply with a meaning smile, "Don't ask me any more." Autumn manœuvres are beneficial not only in training officers and men in field-exercises, but in accustoming them to the frugality of tent-life, and with this view the authorised weight of baggage is strictly limited; yet private traps, messmen's carts, and contractors' vans dog the track of most regiments with an audacity which contemns concealment. In one instance which came within my knowledge the mess charges of a regiment which marched, with frequent halts, from Aldershot to Wimbledon and back, and which, during the week so employed, kept open mess-tent for all comers, were for some individuals £70. Champagne flows, and costly provision is supplied to every Dick, Tom, and Harry visitor, with a profusion suggestive of the luxury which attended Napoleon's grand army in the first stages of its ad-

vance to Moscow. The balls given at — and — and — by successive regiments, each rivalling its predecessor in magnificence, are noble. Alas! that the long-suffering father should sigh at such nobility when he signs a cheque which represents the participation in splendour of his son for three or four hours, and the consequent economies of his daughters for three or four months! Were I to write down the average expenses incurred under some of the above headings, the statement would be pronounced incredible by the inexperienced and a lie by the inculpated; but I confidently appeal to my brother officers to confirm my assertion that, as a rule, the liberality, under the guise of sanctioned hospitality, displayed by young officers in spending their parents' money amounts to an annual sum which is portentous. I admit that some of my illustrative incidents occurred years ago, but I maintain that the principles and practice which characterised them have been but little modified.

Detailed figures would obviously be out of place in this paper, and I must therefore ask the civilian reader to accept the following estimates as the result of my consultations with many wise officers, and of my own not inconsiderable experience. The minimum private annual allowance sufficient to enable an economical subaltern on home service to associate with his brother officers without the mortifications of poverty is—

In an average infantry regiment	£130
In expensive infantry regiments	200
In a horse artillery battery,	
from	£150 to 300
according to the credulity of the father and the black-mail demand of the son.	
In an average cavalry regiment	500

This last figure appears outrage-

ous, but it is within the strict limits of facts. "It is positively unfair to put a lad into the cavalry on a smaller allowance," remarked to me a colonel of that branch of the service, himself a comparatively poor man, who entered into every detail whereby he had arrived at the total.

We may confidently forecast that ere long orders will be issued from the new Horse Guards striking at this evil, with an unbending resolution to override the trivialities of objection and to accomplish the reduction of mess expenses throughout the service. It may be expected that commanding officers will be held primarily responsible that the spirit of these instructions is carried out, executive details being left to their own discretion; that there be no silence concerning subscriptions which are theoretically optional, but which are exacted by custom more peremptorily than by law; that the ostensible mess-bills include, without ambiguity, every single contribution which officers have paid for joint purposes; while generals will be required to state after their inspections the average monthly totals, so that neglect or non-compliance may meet with curative consequences.

Arrangements will, it is hoped, be made whereby officers will have the option of hiring articles of furniture from local Government stores at a rate just sufficient to cover expenses. This equipment would include bedding, washing apparatus, chairs, tables, carpets, &c., not of a War Office pattern, strong and hideous, but of a description in use in private life by gentlemen of moderate means. Such an expedient would spare

officers original outlay and the expense of making good damage caused by the wear and tear of removal, and would save Government large sums in baggage transport. The country would not at present consent to increase the pay of officers, but probably it will be willing to indulge in the costless generosity of diminishing their expenses, while increasing their comfort.

The statement made in the House of Commons in the latter part of the last session, that Latin will henceforth be an optional, and not a compulsory, subject in army examinations, foreshadows an intention so to modify the papers that the preliminary tutorial training of candidates will prove of enhanced value in their subsequent professional career. The shortcomings of our public schools in this respect have recently been warmly discussed in the press;¹ and these institutions will doubtless find themselves compelled not only to adopt a sounder method of instruction in their modern sides, but to give more prominent importance to proficiency in modern languages. Possibly the value attached to these accomplishments will induce the military authorities to encourage officers to perfect themselves therein by an extended leave of absence in cases where a guarantee is given of an honest intention to study in some quiet locality abroad, and not merely to lark about Cannes or Monte Carlo, or to loaf about Paris or the Rhine.

In consequence of the public interest—of modern growth—in all that appertains to the army, and to the continual publication of details affecting every regiment and corps, commanding officers

¹ See also "Public Schools and Army Competitive Examinations," 'Blackwood's Magazine,' July 1895.

have their difficulties in the maintenance of discipline seriously increased. In my former paper¹ I have already alluded to this feature, and its paramount importance will, I trust, justify my reverting to it once more even at the risk of some repetition. The temptation is great to seek for credit through the screened existence of crime. The totals of courts-martial, the aggregates of fines, of imprisonment, and of desertions, are considered by the outside public tests of efficiency and discipline, irrespectively of the varying circumstances under which bodies of men may be situated—a verdict unsupported either by justice or wisdom. The frequent consequence is that offences are either inadequately punished or entirely escape retribution, and that a few malcontent blackguards, by no means representing the general spirit of the regiment, are armed with a latent tyrannical power over their colonel. They have only to combine to perpetrate some public outrage, such as cutting to pieces a dozen saddles or hooting on parade, and a widespread clamour is raised, not against the gentle criminals but against their commanding officer, who, for aught that is known to the contrary, may have exercised a faultlessly judicious firmness against miscreants whom ill-fortune has assigned to his jurisdiction. Irresponsible or interested correspondents in the papers denounce him or demand his removal, a measure which is tantamount to his professional ruin. Truly, only the strongest consciousness of integrity and the sternest sense of duty will prevent him from being absolutely afraid of his men. The following incidents are, I think,

illustrative of much which I have stated; and with the utmost diffidence I invoke the generosity of the reader to excuse my apparent egotism in writing here or elsewhere in the first person, inasmuch as this form of narrative is far more convincing than the hearsay evidence of a supposed informant.

Years ago, so remote as to obliterate names of persons and identity of facts, I was suddenly called on to assume command of a battery which had acquired flagrant notoriety through breaches of discipline and disorders of administration, evils which were accentuated by the pay-sergeant becoming a fraudulent fugitive, and by the officer who had been in previous command cutting his throat. "You will never get your battery into good order," remarked my lieutenant-colonel, not too graciously, shortly after I had joined. "I have always said that the only expedient is to break it up altogether, and to absorb its component parts throughout the artillery." "Give me two months to try," was my reply. An unduly large proportion of my men were young rowdy recruits; but for this very reason they were more malleable to persevering efforts, since they lacked the aptitude of combination for resistance, and were quartered by themselves in a remote fort. Much to their own surprise, they quickly began to behave better, although this improvement was attended with some narrow escapes from disastrous failure. After the conceded law of two months, crime had dwindled down almost to a vanishing point; the battery was subjected to the multiplicity of inspections in which the artillery revels, and I learned, through sources by no means dis-

¹ 'Blackwood's Magazine,' December 1895.

posed to a generous verdict, that it was considered to rank No. 2 in all-round efficiency among the eight batteries in the command.

The next stage was a sudden and unexpected order to embark for China within ten days, in a wretched hired transport crowded with drafts from half-a-dozen different corps. The voyage was tedious and trying, and was diversified by bad weather and alternations of heat and cold, and my young soldiers suffered deplorably not only from sea-sickness, but from a severe outbreak of measles. Here was my opportunity, seconded by my excellent officers, for gaining their confidence and goodwill by exertions for their comfort. The readiness with which they responded was striking. The rowdy drafts—over whom, of course, I had no authority—defied the ship's regulations; looted the spirit-room—in process of which one of their number drank raw rum from the barrel until he was out of breath, and then dropped down dead; and sent the women into hysterics by proclaiming an intention to blow up the "whole blooming cargo." My men, resisting the example, behaved with the demeanour of gentlemen and the docility of Japs. A week prior to our arrival in port I addressed them in terms of approval at their altered and excellent behaviour, but I was unable to proceed beyond a few sentences by reason of the outburst of enthusiastic cheering, which my angriest reproofs at such an irregular proceeding failed to entirely suppress. A fortnight later, when we had landed at Hong-Kong, a detail, too trivial to be explained, put the whole battery in the sulks: former experience of disciplinary repression, recent declarations of gratitude, were cast to the winds through a pin-prick

of inconvenience, and it was necessary to exercise careful tact and anxious effort to prevent a relapse into general ill-discipline. "Then your system was rotten," possibly observes the sour martinet. My system was nothing of the sort. The rottenness consisted in the compulsion to which I was subjected of fighting against the faults and follies of riotous young soldiers with a halter round my neck, ready to strangle me should a dozen stupid miscreants combine to shout forth to the public the indisputable fact that my judgment had not been perfect, and my disposition not faultless. I may add that a strange mutability of fortune brought these identical men, fashioned by time and service into worthy and mature soldiers, once more under my command at a foreign station with other associated batteries. Forthwith they came to loggerheads with these latter by their malicious insistence on my special predilection for the old battery which a few years before had been within a hair's-breadth of blasting their major's professional career.

While predicting probable changes, I will also venture to predict the improbability of a change in one fundamental principle which well-meaning but ill-judging outsiders urge at constantly recurring intervals—the assimilation of English officers to those of foreign countries. A tendency to a servile imitation in trumpery details has frequently made itself evident. In 1855 the French army behaved gallantly in the Crimea, and the English became enamoured with peg-top trousers. In 1859 they won the battle of Solferino, and we immediately copied their cheese-cutting peaks for our forage-caps. In 1870 the Prussians were victorious

at Sedan, and we lost no time in changing our former hand-salute—which may be traced to the metaphor of shading the eyes against the brightness of an illustrious superior—to a gesture with the flat of the hand suggestive of a boy's contempt for his school-master. Foreign officers disport themselves at the opera, in beer-houses, and sometimes when they ride their so-called steeple-chases, in all the panoply of gaudy uniform; and English officers are denounced for their custom of wearing plain clothes when diffident of pursuing social avocations with their identity placarded on their backs. I once had occasion to remark to an officer in Berlin, "No consideration would induce me, habitually and voluntarily, to stroll up and down St James's Street in full uniform on summer afternoons—except, indeed, on the occasion of a levee. Were I to have recourse to such a proceeding, undoubtedly I should incur contemptuous chaff from my brother officers, and a semi-private note from a Horse-Guards official requesting me to discontinue the practice." My Prussian acquaintance racked his brains—is probably still racking his brains—in perplexity at my statement. "Does your uniform carry obloquy with it? Are you ashamed of it?" was his bewildered inquiry. Would that I had been able to communicate to him two subsequent experiences. In 188— I was very sharply reprimanded for appearing in uniform during some Aldershot "minor tactics," whereas all the other staff-officers were in plain clothes. Of course the motive for the restriction was to distinguish the lookers-on from the combatants. On another occasion, during the progress of autumn manoeuvres, I recollect seeing a

highly distinguished general officer walking up and down, gnawing his moustache, shaking his fist, and raging like an angry tiger, because the then adjutant-general of the Horse Guards had issued to him a positive prohibition against wearing his uniform during his amateur attendance on the operations.

On the other hand, many think—and a few dare give utterance to their thoughts—that this shirking of wearing uniform has grown to a pitch which savours of affectation. There are signs that officers will shortly be coerced into a more sensible middle course.

Discussing abroad the features of respective armies with a foreign officer, who owed in some measure his confidential hilarity to the effects of champagne, I inquired, "Are those who hold the grade of — regarded as 'gentlemen' in your service?" "Sir," he answered, loftily, "every officer holding his Majesty's commission—" "Yes, yes," I interrupted, "in theory of course; but tell me, confidentially, is this the case in practice?" His high mightiness thereupon indulged in such an amount of what Captain Marryat's "Peter Simple" calls grandiloquent flapdoodle—and which O'Brien defines as the stuff on which they feed fools—that I hastily ate up my words in dread of the local "Court of Honour" to which my observation might be referred. After all, foreigners have no equivalent for our term "gentleman," which need not be merged in that of "officer," inasmuch as, *cæteris paribus*, the higher the gentleman the better the officer. "I wish, sir," said an ex-sergeant-major to me, "that officers more fully realised the influence by daily-life example which they exercise over their men. Their dispositions, their habits, their

conversation, are constant topics imported into the barrack-room by sergeants, servants, and mess-waiters. Their most secret transactions, creditable or otherwise, leak out with an accuracy of detail which you little suspect." The fashion of good and evil among the officers is invariably adopted as the fashion of good and evil among the privates. "Stop that swearing, men," was the order to some gunners who were indignantly addressing a recalcitrant heavy gun, always designated "she," in terms appropriate to a drunken costermonger casting imputations on a female denizen of Whitechapel; and this elicited the confidential remark of another sergeant-major: "Some batteries always swear, some never; it depends entirely on fashion. If the officers curse, the non-commissioned officers will curse likewise, and the gunners will curse worst of all."

With regard to impending changes affecting the private soldier, it is very improbable that any material increase of pay will be proposed; and many commanding officers are of opinion that this is not necessary in view of the comfortable balance of pocket-money now at the disposal of the prudent and well-conducted. But we may expect that henceforth his nominal pay will be identical with his actual receipts, of course with the proviso that he must make good damages and the cost of optional extras. The system of giving with one hand and taking away with the other, caused by compulsory stoppages for groceries, washing, &c., will be abandoned as impressing the recipient with the idea that he has been "done." If 8d. a-day be the nominal rate, 8d. a-day he will receive, a sum by no means equivalent in the mind

of the private soldier to 1s. 2d. minus 6d.

The present meat ration is often pronounced insufficient. No doubt a slice of 12 ounces uncooked, plus 4 ounces of bone, would be scanty for the separate dinner of one man, but a considerable advantage is gained by aggregating hundreds of three-quarter-pounds; and with the recent spur applied to economical cooking, and with the utilisation of much which has hitherto been treated as waste, no private soldier need be hungry, unless he is a fool or a glutton.

Of late years many measures of detail have been adopted which have materially reduced the temptations besetting soldiers to excess in drinking, such as the abolition of beer-money; of the provision of the daily pint, whether the recipient cared to drink it or not; and of the issue of grog during sea-voyages, which, Lord Wolseley observes, taught every man who had been on board ship a certain time to become a confirmed drunkard. I remember that in the old days a "tot" of rum was served out, under the supervision of an officer, to each man daily, and the surplus in the tub, unfit for keeping, was poured into the sea. At such a heartrending sight, there arose a wail of sorrow in evidence of the love they bore for the liquor. Above all, the canteens have been restricted from selling liquor until a late hour in the day. All this has checked the thrusting of the demon, intemperance, under the men's noses, without the tyrannical legislation which is often pernicious, habitually unsuccessful and invariably repugnant to all but the bigots who mean well and only do ill, and who seek to convert the virtue of moderation into a vice. But commanding officers

find frequent opportunities of circumventing the frailty of their men's inclinations with the full approval of the men themselves. For instance, during a Cape summer, when the heat was of a tropical nature, the men under my command were employed in the formidable labour of mounting several 23-ton guns in forts some distance from barracks. They had been wont, on their return, to rush to the canteen in a body, and to pour gallons of beer down their parched throats. At last I took measures for the supply to each fatigue-party of a bag of oatmeal with a due proportion of sugar, which was emptied into a large vat of cool water close to the scene of their work. It was eyed at first by the men with silent sour contempt, but eventually it was eagerly drunk in small quantities at frequent intervals. It effectually quenched their thirst; it afforded a singular amount of support; and the canteen beer-takings dropped with a run to their normal figures. The prohibition of the sale of spirits, as distinguished from beer, in the canteens, is a restriction of vital importance, but is sometimes dodged by the sergeants' messes, where spirits are not taboo. When inspecting their accounts, I noticed the consumption of a suspiciously large quantity of whisky, and with a view to clearing up the mystery, I gave orders that each separate purchase should be entered in the day-book, instead of being paid for over the counter. Remonstrances from the sergeants on the score that their pride was wounded. "Rubbish!" was my reply; "you are only subjected to the same procedure applied to myself and every one of your officers whenever we call for even a glass of sherry." Down dropped the sale of spirits

as by magic, and in due course I ascertained that under the former system several members had been in the habit of purchasing, ostensibly for their own use, so many bottles of whisky that, had they themselves consumed it, they would long ago have been in a chronic state of delirium tremens. The inference is obvious.

The condition of the married families has been materially improved, while the precautions against improvident marriages have been subjected to additional restrictions, which we may expect will be still further extended. It is extremely difficult to make adequate provision for creditable and moderately comfortable homes for the wives of the privates, and it may be argued that with our short service there is no hardship in requiring the men to defer, as a rule, marriage until they are twenty-five years of age, and have left the army.

The advantages held in the most valued *repute*, both by soldiers *in esse* as well as *in posse*, are the improved prospects of subsequent employment in public or in Government offices, concerning which our administrators have expressed much solicitude in words, which will doubtless in course of time be justified by deeds. Enlistment will then be regarded by the population at large not merely as an enterprise, respectable indeed, and beneficial for a few years, but furthermore as an opening for positions of comfort and competence.

"After all, soldiers are, I suppose, pretty much like other men," would be the natural remark of those who have not spent the best part of their lives in the army. On the other hand, "Soldiers are queer fellows," is the observation which generally winds up a con-

versation amongst experienced officers pondering in consultation over measures for the promotion of their welfare or the repression of their defects. It is certain that in many respects they cannot be in the least like other men, because their lives are attended with many exceptional features which have modified the original stamp of nature. The English soldier on enlistment is suddenly lifted into a higher sphere entirely at variance with his former modes of life and habits of thought. He is free from his previous sordid cares of providing for his daily bread, and from the anxieties entailed by sickness, injustice, and the mutability of civilian callings. Organised regularity instead of haphazard disorder; self-respect applied both to his dress and his demeanour; the development of his intellectual faculties through travel about this wonderful world; reverence for, and pride in, his officers, his regiment, his profession; the spur to distinction; and, above all, constant association with education and refinement beyond his former experience,—all are grafted on him; and though the graft habitually strikes root and habitually bears the best fruit, not only must there be occasional failures, but inconsistent offshoots will sometimes sprout forth. His very excellences will be attended by anomalous defects, his very virtues by unlooked-for vices. He has been rendered a fine fellow—he has also become a queer fellow.

And his officers? Perhaps they, too, differ in many respects from their civilian compeers. The acquisition of a certain quantity of £ s. d. constitutes the sole object of many non-military professions, and is of paramount importance

in all; the sovereigns are swept together, and the transaction is terminated. In the military profession the case is far otherwise. "Say, mister, how many dollars might you be making a-year by that soldiering trade of yours in which you can scarcely call your life your own?" asked an American adventurer of an English officer in China. "Why, deducting my pension, which I could at any time claim, and the extra family expenses entailed by my being so far from home, I do not suppose I am above £80 a-year the richer." "What on airth makes you do it?" was the further query, which was met by the reply, "Because I so love the profession." The Yankee stared at his companion—who, according to the logic of prosaic facts and hard figures, had become a slave, and was rewarded with pauper pay—with the interest similar to that with which an entomologist would scrutinise a curious beetle. "Come out 10,000 miles from England at your time of life, to this beastly climate, this beastly country, and these beastly Chinese, all for £80 a-year! Wal, air, you aire a w-o-n-derful critter."

An officer's success and happiness, measured by a money standard, would give but a pitiful result indeed. Under fortunate circumstances his emoluments may be just sufficient for competence: it would be a chimera to imagine that his utmost efforts will secure for him a tithe of the income which would be assured for him by equal labour, self-denial, and ability applied to commercial pursuits.

Officers also differ from civilians in being willing to face not only poverty and privation, sickness and danger, but the wretch of postponing their dearest family

affections to the call of duty. Willing—nay, far more than willing—a true old soldier-officer, if his career has been unblotted though unsuccessful, will feel so enamoured of his profession that he will declare to himself that were he again called on to choose a career, he would again do likewise.

In concluding my three papers on the past, the present, and the future of our officers and private soldiers, I beg to suggest for the consideration of the public the difficulties which beset the wisest of new administrators whose hearts are set on improvements in some defective old system hallowed by time, fraught with a thousand convenient vices, and vested with the same nature of reverence which has prompted savages to build a roof over the wonderful sundial-given to

them. A generous latitude of action and margin of time must be conceded to reformers who are frequently required to override the tyranny of custom and to defeat the intrepidity of error; to mend the mischief of predecessors who have persistently refused all counsel and yet have been unable to guide; to withstand the spite of the unworthy, whose nature it is to cling to selfish interests. Public servants entering fresh into office under these circumstances, when dealing with some manifest evil apparently susceptible of an easy remedy, are sometimes confronted with the resentment of a culpable party, which turns and rends them with such a ferocity that the reformers discover that instead of chasing a deer, as they had supposed, they have been hunting a tiger.

HENRY KNOLLYS,
Col. h.p., R.A.

A WOLF-BATTUE IN PODOLIA.

TARAN-TARA! taran-tara! "Hang that bugle!" I exclaimed, after vainly trying for the last hour to sleep. "There is nothing for it but to get up."

This was at seven in the morning; and as I had only been able to leave our hospitable entertainer four hours previously, and, moreover, knew the start was fixed for ten, my maledictions on the bugle were, I think, excusable. Put a Polish huntsman in possession of a bugle, he treats it as a child does a new toy, trying its notes in season and out of season; and there he had been parading for an hour under our windows, blowing the confounded thing.

Such an uninviting morning—dark, dreary, and cold, the sky leaden, the ground covered with snow, relieved only by a line of sombre black pines on the near horizon, a few flakes of fine snow, too, falling, which augured ill for the weather later on. Altogether not a nice day on which to stand motionless behind a tree, waiting, perhaps in vain, for a wolf or other game to come within gunshot. It was, however, hopeless to woo sleep any more with that bugle sounding below, so I was soon doing justice to a substantial breakfast.

The place was a large Polish country-house in Podolia, South Russia. The occasion, a wolf-battue on a large scale. Other guests soon began to drop in to breakfast. When all had finished, our respective posts were chosen by lot, the trees having been numbered some days before, to avoid disturbing the game too near the day of the battue.

The start was then effected at

the appointed hour. Our party of forty-eight were all Poles, with the exception of myself, a French tutor in our host's family, and the inevitable Russian chief officer of police of the district, without whose presence the gathering and battue would have been illegal. Polish gentlemen in Podolia have, since the last rising in 1863, been hemmed in by so many restrictive laws, and subjected to so many disabilities, that it would be almost impossible for them to live on their estates were the police to insist on the strict execution of the laws; nor would the officials themselves have a happy time of it. They are isolated among a Polish population, far from any Russians except the police under them, and are very ill paid, so they too would fare badly unless a *modus vivendi* were established with the Polish gentry. To the credit of both sides, it is, I believe, a fact that no money bribe ever passes directly between them; but the Poles have many ways of rendering life more pleasant to the solitary official. Presents of game, fruit, and wine, and loans of skilled labour, which in many large districts is only found among the employés on the estates, are considered legitimate offerings of goodwill. It is also a recognised thing at Polish houses that these officials are, if possible, to be allowed to win at cards. They cannot but enjoy, too, the various charming gatherings to which they are invited; for such is the innate courtesy of a Polish gentleman, that I never saw the slightest indication that these representatives of a hated Government were not honoured guests. While, there-

fore, zealously on the watch for any dangerous symptoms of disaffection, the police sensibly ignore slight infractions of the repressive laws, such as the possession of guns which they know are for *bona-fide* sporting purposes. This officer, for instance, showed me his official report on this battue, in which, after mentioning by name those few present who had Government permission to own guns, he added, "As the destruction of wolves is a praiseworthy object, and one much desired by the Imperial Government, I lent guns to the others." Truly he must have had a goodly arsenal!

The sight at the start was picturesque, and to an Englishman most peculiar. Far down the avenue, and on the broad sweep in front of the house, were drawn up carriages of every description. These included the large open brake, holding twenty people, and drawn by eight horses, which were harnessed in the following manner: Four wheelers abreast, then two before them—these six driven in hand—then two leaders, the near one ridden by a postilion. There were similar but smaller brakes with four or six horses; the ordinary *troika* with three horses abreast; the same with a pair of horses; our hostess's London-built victoria with a pair of thoroughbreds; and the bachelor's cabriolet with one powerful horse. There were also a few cavaliers, each with an attendant holding a couple of hounds of a cross breed between a greyhound and wolf-hound. Finally, there was my musical enemy the huntsman, with his whips and attendants, and a pack of fifty-two fox-hounds to help the beaters in driving the wood. He, with his bugle, hounds, and attendants, preceded us, and after a drive of ten miles over an undulat-

ing plain, and through a wood a mile long, we arrived at the forest where the sport was to begin.

Here again the sight was extraordinary to one whose experience of cover-shooting had been mainly in England. Outside the wood was drawn up a small army in three divisions, who, on our approach, shouldered as one man what at first sight looked like guns, but which turned out to be thick sticks. On my inquiring who they were, our host answered that they were our beaters. "Our beaters!" said I; "why, I thought the men with the huntsman were the beaters." "Oh," laughed he, "those are only the officers of what you call the army." I bowed low with some awe, saying, "Mais, Monseigneur, c'est une chasse royale." The *personnel* consisted of one Grand Veneur, or chief huntsman, 29 whips, of whom 4 were mounted, 702 beaters, and 480 *rabatteurs* or stops, answering to the few men or boys we in England send to the end of a cover to hit the trees and keep the game from breaking cover—in all 1212 men. Each man was given a glass of whisky and a piece of black bread, which they ate squatting on the ground. For the few who did not drink whisky there was a large caldron of hot tea. These men were all peasantry on the estate, and they gladly give their services on such an occasion, wolves and foxes being most destructive to their flocks and poultry.

When they had finished their frugal meal they went forward to the end of the wood, and we took up our appointed places in it. This was about two miles long by one and a half broad, narrowing at the two ends to half a mile. The northern end, and each side for three-quarters of a mile, were enclosed in strong netting, and the shooters were posted at intervals

across the wood, between the points where the netting began on each side. The beaters entered at the south end, the stops lining the outside to prevent game escaping. As soon as the beaters had entered, the bagie, for once a welcome sound, was heard. This was the signal for fur coats and gloves to be discarded, and for cigarettes to be thrown away.

Soon the fur began, and a continuous fusillade ensued. Hares were the first to appear, but they were let alone for the present. Then came foxes, for not shooting which I was subsequently, perhaps deservedly, chaffed by my companions — foxes being there really, what in England they are theoretically, vermin. One nearly stared me in the face for half a minute. I could no more have shot it than I could have shot a squirrel. I was less squeamish later, knowing they really wanted them to be destroyed.

Presently I saw, coming straight to me, what I knew from the shaking of the bushes must be a strong animal. I carefully followed the movement, prepared to shoot when he should come into the open, but to my disgust it turned out to be one of the hounds. This occurred several times during the day; and in my opinion the hounds are useless, in fact a nuisance. They were not kept in hand at all, but followed their own will completely. Some would rush straight through the wood, then go back, driving the game the wrong way. Others would go full chase after a hare or deer. To have given utterance to this opinion, however, would have deeply wounded our host, as no Polish gentleman considers his establishment complete without a pack of hounds.

After the hares and foxes came

deer, which afforded excellent sport. Just as I was thinking the forest held no wolves, an enormous one came "louping" along in an open space straight to my neighbour, stationed 50 yards to my left. When well within shot he fired both barrels. "Well, that fellow is a duffer," thought I, as the brute, unharmed, merely changed his course, and came along parallel with me at 30 yards' distance. When he was abreast of me I fired, but, alas! for my conceit, he did not even swerve a foot, but continued on, yet I am sure nearly every pellet of both barrels struck him. He was finally killed, but not till he had received the charge of a dozen guns. The amount of shot which wolves will carry away is wonderful. A tough old wolf will sometimes receive the fire of the whole line of sportsmen and escape, yet a single lucky shot may bring one down at 60 yards. I should explain that wolves in these drives prefer to trust to the chance of bad shots and their own thick skins, rather than to the hounds and beaters' sticks; for when fired at they do not double back, but invariably make for the sides of the wood, thus receiving the fire of the line. When the beaters came up to us we had another long cold wait, while they went round and entered the wood at the netted end. This drive produced no result in wolves.

Our host had remained outside the wood on horseback, so as to course and bring down with his unerring revolver any wolves that might break cover. One of the favourite sports of a Polish country gentleman is to capture a wolf alive; and as their mode of doing it is probably new to many Englishmen, I will briefly describe it. A wolf being driven into the open, the well mounted horseman pursues

it, armed only with a long whip and some rope. The wolf after a time tries to take rest, but the rider forces it on with his whip, till, after repeated attempts at rest, it sinks exhausted. The rider then springs from his horse, jumps astride the wolf, and holding it by the ears, secures it with the rope. Most men require the assistance of a mounted companion, who ties the wolf while the other holds its ears with both hands, and in this way the capture is comparatively easy; but to do it single-handed is a difficult feat. Nasty bites and even dangerous wounds result, should the hunter have miscalculated the strength of the animal. No one, however, is considered a perfect sportsman till he has done this, yet many never succeed. Of the large party assembled, only our host, two of his stalwart brothers, and one other man, had obtained this blue ribbon of Polish sport.

The wolf-drive over, we had lunch round a roaring fire, and glad I was to get within its revivifying influence. I had for some time been gradually freezing, and felt that were I to remain motionless much longer I should become as stiff as my tree.

Our game was then spread before us. It consisted of eight wolves, besides many deer and foxes. The small number of wolves killed will appear a rather poor result of the labours of such a mighty host, and indeed it was much below the average, fifty having sometimes been killed in that wood in a drive; but for some reason, which I forget, our host had warned us that possibly the forest might not hold a single wolf. As, however, it is computed that each wolf in its passage through a district kills six calves and thirty sheep, and that foxes cause equal devastation in the farmyards, it will be seen

that our battue effected some good. I don't think one wolf escaped. Indeed the object of the battue was to destroy the whole pack.

Lunch over, we had a hare-drive, at which I felt more at home, and retrieved my sporting reputation, somewhat damaged by my failure to kill a wolf. I must admit, however, that I had a better chance than the others, being the only one provided with suitable cartridges. We also tried a swamp for wild boar, but without success, and darkness then coming on we started homewards.

The country, which had looked very unlovely by day, assumed a new and most lovely form as we drove through the wood half-way. There had been some heavy rain the previous day, followed by slight snow, fog, and frost. The upper parts of the boughs were thus pure white, the snow standing out from the small branches and twigs in feathery wreaths and stars, while the under surfaces were encrusted and sparkling with icy crystals, and every fir-needle had its pendent diamond-drop. As the bright light from our torches flashed on the frosted snow and ice, the effect was fairy-like and lovely in the extreme. The forest above appeared a maze of white network, embroidered with myriads of diamonds, rubies, opals, and topazes.

When we left this vision of beauty the drive was indeed dreary, rendered the more so by our falling in with a snow-blizzard which caused us to lose the track. We knew that happily we were near the house, so we prudently remained still, and soon heard the big bell which is always rung during these storms. This guided us safely to the house, and glad we were of its shelter and warmth. An idea of the size and style of the house and stables may be gathered

from the fact that the house party numbered 74, that 200 horses were stabled, and that at the ball which followed, five drawing-rooms *en suite* were thrown open.

I have never met anywhere greater hospitality and more genuine kindness and *bonne camaraderie* than among the Poles, and my visits to them will ever remain a most pleasant memory to me.

I was perforce detained here by a snow-blizzard, during which no sane man would start on a journey. These Russian snow-blizzards are terrible manifestations of Nature's wrath, and annually cause much loss of life throughout Russia. I do not know if the Canadian blizzards assume the same form. In Russia the essential feature of a real blizzard is its cyclonic nature, so that the wind is no guide to you, blowing as it does from all points of the compass, and whirling the snow round and round. The clouds of snow are so thick that you cannot see a yard before you; and it is not so much the descending snow which overpowers you (indeed, I believe a blizzard can occur without snow falling at the time), as the snow driven along and upward from the ground. This is as fine as dust, and penetrates everywhere, through your clothing, into your ears, nostrils, and eyes, almost blinding you, and, driven by the fierce icy blast, stings like so many needles. The best chance of escape, and that a poor one at times, is to trust to the instinct of your horses; but even they cannot, in a severe blizzard, face the storm of cutting snow, and continually turn round, thus getting bewildered. Those who may have ridden on dark nights along dangerous places where a single false step would be fatal, know how they can trust to the marvellous instinct, or it may be eyesight, of

the horse; but in a severe blizzard his instinct seems benumbed, and he is little less helpless than a man. Sometimes these storms last for many hours, even for days, then woe betide the traveller caught in one!

Many may remember an awful story told during the Crimean war of a whole Russian regiment being thus lost. General Todleben told me this was an exaggeration, but that the truth was sufficiently appalling. The real fact was that a battalion of 300 men were caught in such a storm while marching from Odessa to Nicolaieff, and all perished except four, who jumped on a sleigh galloping through their midst; and this happened although succour was sent on the arrival of the sleigh at Odessa, distant only ten miles. In this case the storm had begun with rain, and the men's clothes were frozen on them, so they succumbed sooner than they would otherwise have done, the storm not being an exceptionally severe one.

An English engineer told me that, when making a railway in the country, he was overtaken by a blizzard when not more than 300 yards from his house. Although he was a man of magnificent physique and great endurance, and knew every foot of the district, yet he was two hours in getting to his house. He only reached it at all through providentially falling into a ditch he had himself cut, and which led straight to his door, but he was never again the same man physically.

Peasants living in lonely places have frequently been overpowered and found dead within a few yards of their houses. Of late years the church bells of the scattered villages in South Russia have been rung during these storms, and have saved many lives.

I myself was only in one of these severe blizzards, and your readers will perhaps bear with me if I relate my personal experience of it. This was on the occasion of another battue in South Russia. When our party of six Englishmen left the train at the station whence we were to drive to our friend's house, there were symptoms of snow, but it was too early in the season for a blizzard to be thought possible. As the distance to drive was only five miles over a good level road, we started without any hesitation, and did not even take the precaution to get a meal at the station, thinking we should do the drive in half an hour. When we left the station at 4.30 the first snow of the season began to fall, but it did not cause us the slightest uneasiness, as it appeared to be merely an ordinary snowstorm, and we galloped on at a great pace; but when we had gone three miles, the fury of the blizzard suddenly burst on us in a wild whirlwind of snow. The horses turned round and round, and in a few minutes the drivers said they had lost the track. We got out and made some fruitless attempts to find the road by going back on the carriage-tracks, but the whirling snow had obliterated them almost instantly. It was then decided to abandon the carriage in which some of our party and the luggage had been placed, to pile the luggage into the other carriage, and to harness to it all the horses, our party to walk and ride in turn.

What a fearful night march ensued! The hurricane blasts battered us, the icy cold benumbed us, ill-clad, ill-shod, fasting, altogether unprepared for such a storm. The sharp fiercely driven snow-points pained and almost blinded us, the prolonged trudge exhausted us, worn out by toil,

constantly falling into drifts from which we each time rose with increasing difficulty. The frequent stoppages when, in pitch darkness, we attempted with frozen hands to adjust the harness, still more benumbed us. Then again the poor Russian peasants with us kept loudly bemoaning their fate, saying we should all be dead before morning. They would try to lag behind, and wanted to give in, lie down, and pray. We English, while equally knowing that it was an occasion for prayer, thought we should be more worthy of having our prayers answered if we used for our preservation such powers mental and physical as had been granted to us. There may indeed have been moments when the evil temptation also came to some of us to abandon the struggle; and here I must admit that the one among us who by his cheeriness, calm courage, aid to the failing, and fertility of resource most inspired us with hope when we began to despond, and to whose guidance we mainly owed our lives, had a large admixture of Polish blood in his veins. Even he, however, admitted, when we were safe, that his only hope throughout had been that we were by chance going in the right direction. The constant hand-to-hand struggles with our horses, which literally cowered before the blasts, endeavouring to avoid them by turning round, probably were beneficial, as tending to keep up our circulation.

We all knew that our host would do his utmost to aid us, and at short intervals we fired guns to guide the relief-party to us. "Hark! a gun," cried I with joy, roused from my lethargy, as I thought I heard a sound distinct from that of the howling wind. Alas! no one else had heard it. Hardly able to endure my disap-

pointment, I urged them to fire all together again in a minute, saying that as I had been alone ahead of the carriage, they could not perhaps hear so distinctly as I. They fired, and oh! what sweetest of music followed in the unmistakable sound of an answering gun close to us! Such a *feu-de-joie* of guns followed, and in a few minutes the relief-party was with us, bringing restoratives and furs. They had come in a row with torches, spread over half a mile of country, each keeping within hail of his neighbour, and dropping at intervals, within shouting distance of each other, pickets to maintain communication with the house. The torches they carried partake also of the nature of stoves, being large, round, and deep wire-baskets slung at the end of poles, and filled with light resinous balls, which are easily lit, and of which a supply is carried in a sack. They throw out considerable heat, which was necessary to keep the stationary pickets alive.

Most providentially we had staggered on somewhat in the right direction, and, when found, were not more than half a mile from the track, nor a mile from the house; yet we must have made many detours, as we had kept moving the whole time, but had only advanced one mile in five hours, having lost the track before five o'clock, and it being ten when we were relieved. We were actually then going away from the house. The relief-party arrived just in time for one of us, as that fatal sleep, the result of extreme cold and exhaustion, had begun to take its fell hold on him, and it was only with great difficulty he had been roused to walk when last it had been his turn to leave the carriage.

I would mention, in conclusion, as some slight consolation to any who may have lost those dear to them through exposure to cold, that when that sleep has once got possession of them, I believe the remainder to be painless.

G. E. STANLEY.

THE STORY OF THE STRANGE CHANCE MINE.

"The gentleman . . . did not look particularly clever."

I.—THE HONOUR AND GLORY OF THE HOUSE.

I BELONG to *the* House, and I glory in it, and in belonging to it.

To what House? Not—to the House of Commons, which generally arrogates to itself in public that special designation, but which endlessly occupies the time of the country in pulling down what it has built up, and in building up again what it has pulled down. Not—to the House of Lords, which lately has been somewhat insistently, and even ostentatiously, letting the other House understand that after all it is *the* House, and intends to continue so. Not—to any of the great Houses, so-called, of this continent, of Guelph, Hohenzollern, Romanoff, Hapsburg, Bourbon, or Savoy; or, ranging further afield, to the House of the Son of Heaven, or of the Lord of the Rising Sun. Not, certainly not—to the lesser Houses of princes or nobles of Europe or of Asia. Not—even to the mighty financial Houses, the real rulers of the earth, though of them I speak with more respect, for they belong to *Us*, and, in truth, their glory and honour and power are only a part of *OURS*. No! I belong to *THE* HOUSE, the House of Houses, the Stock Exchange of London, which is the centre, the true *omphalos*, of the world, by whose utterances, sent forth with no Delphic ambiguity, kings reign and peace and war are made.

When the great writer appears who has the brain to comprehend and the heart to dare tell its story, what a story that will be! For this House is the Golden Heart

of England, and of more than of England even—it is the Golden Heart of the world. Lord Beaconsfield, who should have been a prince of our House, but who chose the smaller destiny of ruling the greatest empire of history (as those who are not of *Us* call it), said many wise things, but none wiser than this. People—what do people outside the House know?—had been talking gloomily of Russia threatening the frontiers of India by its advances, "in the interests of civilisation"—like our own, towards the Hindoo Koosh; and he rebuked these babblers by simply saying, "After all, the key of India is here, in London." He meant that the key he referred to lay in the House, *our* House. And indeed there is no figure of speech expressive of majesty and dominion that may not be applied to our House.

I daresay I should not write in this fashion, which might seem boastful were it not the bare truth, if I had not been carried completely out of myself by what I saw stated in a society journal the other day, and my own somewhat intimate connection with what was there alluded to. Perhaps it was not so much what was actually said in the particular instance, as the general tone of it, which I found so objectionable. There had been some sneering remarks about the South African market—the Kaffir Circus; how it was filling the pockets of a few adventurers and of a multitude of brokers. In these days we have

to bear with a good deal of this kind of wretched talk, which chiefly comes from those who were themselves mainly responsible for the silly inflation. Not that in any case these gentry cared so much for the public as to help them on along the road to fortune, or to warn them back from destruction; but that the spoil in the shape of advertisements was a goodly one, probably an unparalleled one. Now that the golden flood has ebbed from the printing offices, and the long lines of "ads." appear no more in their papers, they discover all of a sudden how hollow the swindle has been; they call the House a Den of Thieves, a Gambling Hell, into which the innocent and unwary are lured to their ruin in a veritable Dance of Death for Dollars! What bosh! Is it any wonder that I, knowing what I know, am indignant at such stuff as this? But—to go back to this precious journal. There was one paragraph in it which both fixed my attention and raised my temper; because, as I have said, it happened to concern me pretty closely.

It ran in this wise:—

Last night at the Opera one of the best boxes was occupied by a gentleman and two ladies who literally blazed with diamonds. The gentleman, who is reported to have made a quarter of a million in an incredibly short space of time in South Africans on the Stock Exchange in the late unholy gamble, did not look particularly clever. The display of diamonds on the part of these new-rich excited some laughter, though, perhaps, it would have been more fitting if a feeling of pity had been engendered instead. What is that old saying about "ill-gotten gear"?

Comment upon the malicious

character of the statements made is needless. I fancied I knew the persons referred to, and I took some pains to find out if I was right. I was quite correct in my supposition. The party in the opera-box consisted of Mr Charles Irwin, of the well-known Strange Chance Mine, and two friends of his, a Mrs Rendall and her young daughter, the former being in a certain manner joint-owner with him of that amazing property. I may say at once that they were clients of mine, and their story forms one of the many romances of the House, most of which, however, rarely see the light of day. The whole paragraph was a libel on these excellent people, as you will easily judge from what follows. Their own immediate circle are well aware of the truth, and will read this story, should they happen upon it, with renewed sympathy for these no doubt lucky but deservedly fortunate South Africans. It is hardly necessary, however, to premise that I have thought it best to substitute fictitious names in place of those they bear; and that, as I can only here and there appear as an actual participant in the narrative, much of the detail of the story, which would have been deeply interesting, cannot be given.

Perhaps I should state that I am not an imaginative man. It is true that I have occasionally taken risks in the way of business which have brought down upon me the silent but none the less eloquent disapprobation of Mr Walters, my managing clerk, who has an unalterable abhorrence of anything he considers of a "fancy," or of an ultra-speculative, description. Sometimes they have turned out well enough; sometimes I have had my fingers burned—a sacrifice to the manes of the House. The

nearly balanced accounts of profit and loss on these ventures, which show a little bit on the bright side, allow Mr Walters and myself to continue on the best of terms. There is not an atom of romance or poetry about Walters, and it is impossible to suppose there ever will be, though, if he could look into the inner atmosphere of the House, he would see many curious things; but he is dead to them all. I have now and again had a half-formed suspicion, which would make me uneasy if there could be any ground for it, that Walters does think I do imagine things; but he is at least a witness to the "genuineness and authenticity" (shades of Paley and my Little Go!) of this story. Indeed, but for his strenuous opposition to what I did, I daresay there would be no story to tell. But I will be fair to Walters. For he did not listen, as I did, to that first part of the tale which impressed me so much; he did not see Irwin's pale face and strained eyes when he spoke of these mysterious mountains, and of what he found there, and the horror of it; of the glad surprise which came later on in the old and long-forgotten gold-fields beyond Tati, and then of his struggle with himself in what he called his Great Temptation. No; Walters could never feel, as I felt, the grand openness of that simple manly soul as it discovered itself to me, which determined me to believe, which, indeed, shamed me into believing, that what I heard, out of all ordinary experience as it doubtless was, was the truth and nothing but the truth. And this is the story of the man whom that pestilent scribbler characterised as "not particularly clever." Of cleverness we have enough in the House, as we would need to have; but of goodness, perhaps not so

much as we might. Walters, I am almost certain, would regard the latter portion of this sentence as displaying pitiable weakness, if nothing worse; but let it stand. He would more readily agree with the first part, as there is a general idea in the House that it needs no teaching in respect of cleverness from any source whatever; and it is right.

I have every reason to remember that grey winter afternoon when Walters asked me if I would see "a person,—a quiet persistent person," he said, "on particular business." Walters' whole air in making this apparently innocent request was indescribably full of suspicion of the "person," and menace of myself. It had been a somewhat trying day in the House, where business, like the Queen's Government, must be carried on at all times, even when the tide of war rolls darkly around one; and it was probably a tacit resentment of Walters' manner, coupled with my own sense of the untowardness of fate on that very day (what a little way we see ahead!), more than any better reason, that moved me to say I was disengaged, and would see the "person." It was even with some secret satisfaction that I felt every muscle of Walters' highly respectable back quiver displeasure as he walked out of the room. Then, presently, enter Charles Irwin, and the story of the Strange Chance Mine, which I here tell for the honour and glory of the House, and for the confusion of its enemies, who are many and bitter.

Contrary to his usual custom, Walters, whose face expressed hesitation, doubt, caution, and half-a-dozen other similar feelings, came in with the stranger.

"This gentleman," said Walters,

"says he has an introduction to you from somebody." Walters' inimitably inflected voice hinted much more. Walters does presume a little on his long and faithful service, and I made a note to tell him so when a fit opportunity presents itself—and I have the courage to do it.

Irwin at once offered me his hand—an act which rather surprised me—and then a letter. My room is so arranged that I sit with my back to the windows, and when any one interviews me he has the light on his features; and, while I was opening the letter, I took a good look at my visitor. I do not know that my scrutiny suggested anything special except that Walters' phrase recalled itself to me,—it was the face of a "quiet persistent person." There was not the high look of success on it—the look that impresses the House as nothing else can do—which there is on it to-day: something there was, however,—something that spoke of waiting, expectancy, and purposefulness. There was no suggestion of diamonds about him, either literally or figuratively, then, any more than there is now. He is not one of those; though he is not a prig, nor a Philistine, nor in any way an *ass*, but one who both takes and gives with open hand what the good gods send.

The letter he had handed me bore the name of an old established bank in Cape Town, and the signature, at which I next looked, was at first strange to me. I glanced from it to Irwin with an unspoken inquiry.

"The letter is from Mr Alexander Macdonald of Cape Town," he said. "He told me that you would probably have forgotten

him, as you had had no communication for years, but you were at school together at Rossal."

To be sure. I had indeed forgotten Macdonald, but the recollection of him returned along with many memories of that redoubtable captain of our fifteen. He was known as Sandy, because in a moment of early confidence, sincerely repented of later, he had said his sister called him that, and it struck us all as decidedly Scotch and appropriate. That appellation had been converted by the usual processes of schoolboy humour and inventiveness into Sands, White Sands, Grey Sands, or any other kind of sands that took our fancy. I had lost sight of Sandy in the intervening years—which, alas! were many. The letter was quite formal, merely stating that the bearer was Mr Charles Irwin, who was interested in a mining property in South Central Africa, and he had advised him to consult me about it. Evidently Sandy had kept better track of me than I had of him, for he seemed to know that I was a member of the House, otherwise he would not have sent Irwin to me. The note went on to say that the writer had "considerable confidence" (canny Sandy!) in Mr Irwin, and concluded by commending him to my good offices.

Now, if there was anything I was not interested in, it was in mines. No mines at any price, had been my motto in the House, and it had been an excellent one. But if this man was a friend of Sandy Macdonald, it behoved me to do something for the sake of the old school, if for nothing else. Well, to handle a mine! Not if I knew myself. Irwin must have seen something of this protest in my face, for he said—

"If you will kindly permit me, I shall take up some of your time—if you will be so good as to hear me. Perhaps this is not a convenient opportunity?"

But I had been thinking also of Macdonald and Rossal, and of a certain glorious, never-to-be-forgotten charge of Sandy's that time we played and licked the Midlands. Certainly I would be civil to the man. "Oh yes," I said, "I am at

your service. There is no time like the present."

"It will take an hour or two," he said. But that was more than I could give just then.

"Come and dine with me to-night," I said, after a moment's pause. "We shall have plenty of time after dinner. But perhaps you are engaged?"

No; he was not engaged. He would be very happy.

II.—THE PLACE OF A SKULL.

After dinner, at which Irwin appeared in an extraordinary coat of what, I presume, was a strictly colonial build of uncertain antiquity, we lit our cigars; and he began.

"You will pardon me," he said, with some ceremony, for his manners were perfect notwithstanding his coat, "if I tell you my story in my own way. I know it will not have a business-like sound, but I can tell it only in the one way. I was born in England."

Goodness! was the man going to give his whole history? Well, I prepared myself for the worst, but I did hope he would not be dull, otherwise I feared the "sweet nostalgia of sleep," as Mr Du Maurier calls it, would overpower me. No; it certainly was not business-like on the face of it, but I doubt if it would have led to business if it had been told differently.

"I was born in England. My parents believed there were better openings in the colonies or in India than at home, and, from my earliest years, it was determined that I was to go to the Cape. I was sent out there with a small sum of money, but with large instructions to make a fortune

quickly and return. That is the programme generally laid out in such circumstances, you know," he said, with a smile. "When I reached Cape Town there did not seem to be any person who particularly cared to employ me, and I soon spent the money I had brought, and in the usual way—in sport, in gambling, drinking, and all the rest of it."

This was frank at least.

"I was rapidly going to pieces,—and small pieces at that,—when I fell in with a man who has been a good deal in and out of my life. His name was Rendall—Jack Rendall everybody called him; a popular, sharp-witted, quick-tempered, but somewhat changeable fellow. He followed a nondescript business—insurance, lands, properties of various kinds, and that sort of thing. He picked me up somehow, and his advice and his help saved me from utter perdition. By his influence I obtained a post as schoolmaster up-country, which I held for some time. It was not exactly a good place, but I soon got a better in Cape Town itself, which I kept for several years. Meanwhile I had become careful and steady, and no longer spent my money foolishly. In-

deed I managed to lay by quite a fair sum, which I lodged in Mr Macdonald's bank—that is how I came to know him,—and it went on growing as I kept on saving. Then I had a disappointment. It was in connection with a lady."

I nodded sympathetically, for I had been *there* myself.

"She married another."

Quite so. I nodded again; this, too, had been my own experience, — but that is another story.

"Her husband was my friend and benefactor, Jack Rendall."

Thank the Powers! The "other fellow," in my case, was not a friend of mine, for, as things turned out, I should not have wished any friend of mine such misfortune. How lucky we are in what we don't get!

"I had seen Rendall from time to time, and he was a conspicuous figure everywhere in colonial society. He was the best of company and took with everybody; at any rate he took with her. I envied him, of course; and there were moments of rage when I hated him with all my heart, and on such occasions what he had done for me only made me the more furious. Time passed on; the Rendalls left Cape Town for the Transvaal it was supposed, and I lost sight of them. But the blow had unsettled me; I don't think that I showed it, yet I felt it all the same. Besides, there was a great deal in the air of South Africa to unhinge the steadiest trudge along life's road. There were diamonds in the air, gold in the air! You know, sir, what is taking place out there every day. But you can't really picture it; you have to be in it to understand it. It is a disease, a fever, an infection—a pestilence, if you like. Of course you have

heard of the Barberton Boom, of Kimberley, Leydenburg, and the Randt; but you have to be in them to know what they mean. Ten years ago the cry was all of the Leydenburg—that was over in '87. Then came the Randt. The dead might have waked to life if they could have heard what we heard of it. You people here in this old country with your slow-moving pulses can have no idea of it!"

Slow-moving pulses, indeed! The man evidently knew nothing of the House.

"I was carried away by it. Anyhow, I was in the mood to welcome change and excitement, and I joined a party going to Pretoria. Three of us were Englishmen, the fourth an Irishman. Our intention was to see the Randt and the country thereabout, and to find, we hoped, some sort of Randt for ourselves. I drew half of my money out of Macdonald's bank; the others, except Barney the Irishman, had money too. Barney, however, was an old prospector, and we agreed to take him, as we thought his knowledge would be of great value to us. In due time we reached Pretoria, and then struck off for Johannesburg. We saw the Randt, and spent some days among the mining camps, and in looking round generally. Well, everything appeared to be taken up—everything that seemed in the least likely to give any return, and still more that never will. And I saw also that the gold was hard and costly to get at, and that our small capital was of no use there. Companies, rich companies, were needed to work the quartz. But there were hundreds of miles of country west and north of us, and the report was that there was plenty for everybody in

these regions. I myself had talked with a Portuguese trader who had told me that he had often bought fine gold, taken out of the sands of some of the rivers up there, from the natives, who put it up for safety and concealment from their own chiefs in the quills of birds' feathers. So we considered the matter, and formed a plan to go up over the Limpopo to Tuli through a part of what had been Sekukuni's country. We might have gone by coach to Tuli by way of Pietersburg, but as we deemed it well to take goods to barter or exchange with the natives, it was cheaper for us to get an outfit of our own. So we bought two waggons and trek oxen, laid in our supplies and sundries to *handel* (trade), and started north. Before we left we threw dice for partners; Barney became my partner, and the first waggon fell to our lot. No one ever had a better partner than I had. He was a rough sort of chap, and could neither read nor write, but he was very staunch and true-hearted, as I had good reason to know. He had been in Australia and California and British Columbia, and, like many another of the prospector type, had held fortunes in his hands—which had gone to other people who had taken advantage of him. He told me much of his wanderings, and of the changes and chances of his life, which had been many. One thing was certain—he knew more about gold, whether in rock or in sand, than most mining men. Many had sought his services as a prospector, offering him almost extravagant terms, but he hated to be tied down. Our party just suited him, as he was practically 'boss' of it."

I knocked off the ash from my cigar listlessly. I was, in truth,

just a little bored, and the "sweet nostalgia of sleep"—admirable phrase!—threatened me. When would Irwin come to the point, if there was any point? The voice was slow, precise—school-masterish, I suppose—rather than monotonous. It went on:—

"Well, that journey might have been like any other if it had not been that I was taken down with malarial fever. It was December and very warm, and I daresay the veldt was not healthy, but we soon got into the hilly country. I had felt ill before we left, but hoped that the change and moving about, together with heavy doses of quinine, would shake it off, but I grew worse and worse. We had been out from Pretoria about a week, and were some fifty or sixty miles north of Pietersburg, when we experienced a fierce storm—sheets of rain and savage lightning such as you never saw; not one of your well-behaved ladylike English storms, but one that seemed as if it might tumble and jumble the world into bits. We all suffered, but, of course, owing to my being really ill to start with, it affected me the most. Fever seized upon me with all its might, and when I got back to full consciousness out of the hells of delirium and utter prostration, it was to find Barney alone with me. The others had waited for a day or two to see how my fight for life would end, and, as they had made up their minds that I would surely die, had gone off on their journey after trying in vain to persuade Barney to leave me to my fate. I have never seen them since—though that is nothing in South Africa, where men disappear without much remark."

Would the man never come to business, I thought. He made a

longish pause, and I said encouragingly, "You got better, at any rate."

"We went on by easy stages," he resumed, "Barney looking after me, and as tender as a mother. We got beyond the cultivated districts, up north of the Olifant to the Matzatzes Range, and north of that, passing through a wild and picturesque region studded over with strange isolated hills of every shape and form,—it looked as if the children of the old gods had been at play with these fantastic rocks and boulders, and, disturbed in their sport, had departed and then forgotten them altogether. There are large belts of forest all over the country that have grown up in this playground of the gods since they left. We made frequent halts for days at a time, Barney saying there was no hurry, and the rest did me good. As I grew stronger I used to take walks, sometimes with Barney, sometimes alone, though he was never far away from me. And indeed it is well to have company in the Zoutpansberg,—for though the game, which is in the form of lions, leopards, and suchlike, is not what it was, there is still plenty. Well, one day I roamed off by myself, and went up the side of a hill for a short distance. I was still very weak, and could not do much in the way of climbing, but there was a sort of track, and I followed it on. And there I found it."

There was a curious hush about the man's voice—it was very low and yet penetratingly clear; the face took on a tense look, and the eyes were staring straight at me, through me, beyond me. I have said that I am not an imaginative man, and I resented with a feeling of discomfort the trick my senses were playing me. With a half-indignant jerk I pulled myself

together and said, "You found the reef, or the vein, or whatever you like to call it, I suppose?"

"No. I did not, but I found this." He took from the pocket of his coat an envelope, and he held it in his hand for a while thinking. "There is a letter, or, rather, there are two letters within this cover," he said; and I cannot convey in words the solemnity of his manner, and yet he spoke quickly too. "Going along that bit of a trail, the path of some wild beast most likely, I noticed a piece of cloth—tweed—caught in the fork of a branch where it left the stem of the tree. Somebody had been shooting thereabouts, I concluded, and had got his clothes torn in the bush. Then I went on farther, and I came on a heap of bones, parts of a human skeleton. The skull, with its face to the ground, lay just outside the heap. I told you I was still weak from the fever, and the sight had a powerful effect on my feeble nerves. It may surprise you, such being the case, but I went over and picked up the skull. Yet, if you ever come upon a lot of human bones, and you see a skull among them, though your first feeling may be one of recoil, your impulse will be to take and lift it and look at it. It is a kind of instinct, derived, I suppose, from the fact that it is by people's faces that we know them. I can give you no idea of the horror that swept over me when I saw two living eyes of dark purple black look out at me from these bony sockets. I held it for a moment, and the eyes moved—such eyes, the like of which had never before been seen in the head of a man. Thus I seemed to know there was life in the Thing: a violent shudder and abject terror and dread took possession of me; the earth went round and the sun swam in

the heavens; and presently—there was Barney bending over me with my head and shoulders on his knee. 'There, there, lad, you're better now,' he said; and as I lay, weak as I was and dazed, the sweetest thing that ever I saw in my life was that red, freckled, ugly, wholesome face above me. Then recollection came, and I cried aloud in fear and trembling, 'Where is the Thing? Have you seen it?' It might after all, you see, sir, have been only a return of the delirium of the fever. 'What Thing? Shure you're dramin'. What Thing d'you mane? D'you mane that?' I looked round, afraid, and there lay the skull, and on the top of it, nearly covering it, was a misshapen creature, the size of your fist, all legs and eyes and bloated body. I felt myself going again as I nodded over towards it. 'Why, you blissid baby,' said Barney, 'it's jist some sort of almighty bug; shure it's nothin' but a big spider, I belave.' He laid me down gently, and with his rifle knocked the Thing over and smote it into pulp. Then he took up the skull and examined it. 'An' a cunnin' nist the crater had for shure?' And he showed me the spider, or whatever it was, had been making himself a snug den. No doubt, I had disturbed it at work; and woven into the roof of the skull were bits of cloth—the same kind as I had seen in the

bush—along with silky-looking materials spun from the Thing's body. Of course it had been only a silly fright, and I acknowledged I had made a precious fool of myself as I told Barney about it. 'Ah, you're jist an infant,' he said, 'an' that's the size av it. But some poor mother's son met his death here; an' 'twas a white man too, and not a niggur.' Then he went and, after crossing himself, looked at the bones, and put them together with the skull. And below the breast-bones we came upon a large piece of the dead man's coat, which had a pocket in it, and in the pocket we found a small package, and inside that this message from the dead." And Irwin held up the envelope in his hand. "If it had not been, you see, sir, for my weakness, and from the fright I got over the skull, and my fainting away, we should never have made any more to-do about the bones. Bones are plenty enough in that country—human bones, too—where the wolves and hyenas are not too thick."

This was giving the story a decidedly unpleasant flavour—not nice just after dinner. But there was no mistake that I was interested enough now, and listened eagerly to every word. I lit a fresh cigar; offered Irwin some whisky-and-soda, which he declined; helped myself; and waited for what was next to come.

III.—THE FINDING OF THE STRANGE CHANCE.

"There is no need to make any mystification about the letters," continued Irwin. "They are written on the same sheet of paper: one is from Mrs Rendall to her husband, the other is Jack's reply—the last thing he ever wrote, poor chap."

I had somehow not expected

this, and it did not at first tell in Irwin's favour with me. But later on it did. I reflected that it was too daring for a mere invention. Certainly his story was becoming extraordinary enough—"growing in interest," as the scribblers would phrase it.

"Read Mrs Rendall's first," he said, as he handed me the envelope. I pulled the paper out: there was but the one sheet of paper, as he had said,—the ordinary double sheet of writing-paper,—and on it two letters—one in ink, the other in pencil, dim and almost obliterated in parts. I don't think it would be quite right to put down all these letters contained, but this is the gist of them.

Mrs Rendall's was headed Pietermaritzburg, Natal, and was dated two years back from the time when it was found. It began by stating that she could not be certain that this would ever reach her husband: he had been away a long weary time—all the longer and wearier because she had received no word from him. She and their child, "little Mamie," were well. But they sighed for his return. Mamie cried for her father. "When will dear papa come home?" was often on her lips. Friends were very kind and thoughtful, although they were not of their own people. And, alas! the money he had left—no doubt he had expected to get back sooner—was all spent long ago. She was supporting the child and herself as well as she could, and if only he were back with them they would be so glad, even if it were with empty hands that he came. There was a hint that the struggle was a severe one, but the spirit of the writer was brave and hopeful and womanly and loving. It was signed "Your fond wife, Mary Rendall."

Rendall's reply, written in large wavering letters, blurred and hard to decipher, brought the unaccustomed moisture to my unsentimental eyes. It had been composed, if that is the right word, in circumstances of the direst distress both of body and mind. That it

had been written at all showed great resolution and force of character; for the man was very near his end—the horrible death of a sorely wounded being dying slowly of starvation, and alone in these vast solitudes. It was hardly any wonder that the letter had a touch of insanity about it. It appeared from it that his wife's letter—when he died it lay next to his heart—had only reached him after long delay, and nothing in it indicated whether he had started south immediately on receiving it or not. He said he hardly knew if he were mad or sane; he had been unconscious and out of his senses already—that he was almost sure of. But as he felt better at this moment he had gathered up whatever of strength was left to him to write on the desperate chance that some one might perhaps come upon his body and find this message. He knew he was dying. He had been left there, deserted by his Kaffirs, on the side of the berg with a broken thigh, which had been the result of an accident. He hoped, poor devil, that a lion or some other animal might soon finish him. "In any case," went on the piteous wail, "I shall never see you again; never see your sweet face, nor the child's. But one thing I must do before I pass away. Some one must find this I write, and it is for him I write. And he will do it—he must do it." The characters were here more strongly made, as if the man had conquered his weakness by sheer force of will. "Go to Tati," the letter said, "to the ruin that stands one mile west from the station on a hill 200 feet above the river—the old stone fort. In the south-west corner there are several rooms,—stand on the top of the eastern room, just where

the walls meet. Look north-west to the Matoppo Range, and you will see miles away, when the light is clear, a clump of trees and the ragged edges of the berg beyond it. North of the trees you will find a reef which shows signs of having been scraped, just scraped, by miners long ago who did not know their business. It is one of the richest gold-reefs in Africa. I know I am not mistaken. To you, I say, who find this, I direct you to take the property which I found; but give a half-share to my wife, Mary Rendall, whose name is in this paper, or may the heaviest curse pursue you for ever. Even though dead, I, who am even now as dead, shall make your life a hell if you do otherwise." Thus, as if spent by this supreme effort, the writing became straggled and uncertain. All that I could make out was something that looked like "to die the death of a dog." But the signature, "J. Rendall," was firm enough, and even peculiar in the way it was formed from long and familiar use.

"Yes, that's his signature—I know it well," said Irwin, who was standing beside me as I read.

If this were a swindle, an imposture, what a prince of fakers this man Irwin was! What a story, to be sure! If this were all a concoction, carefully planned and skilfully rehearsed, what an actor was this adventurer from South Africa; for if ever sincerity seemed to stamp a man's words, it sealed them now. Such were my thoughts. Of course I now know he was no actor, and that his tale was true. But then, at the time, I could not swallow it. I was bewildered, tossed about like a ship blown out from its moorings. Here was I holding in my hands these letters which told their own story so

graphically; and yet feeling sure there must be something wrong somewhere.

"It is a strange story, a wonderful story; it is a romance, Mr Irwin," I said at last, and with marked hesitation. For of course I foresaw the end; any idiot could foresee it. He had found Rendall's mine, if mine it could be called, and he wished me to get help to develop it. And he had come to me of all persons in the world—I, who would have nothing to do with mines; and all because, forsooth, I had been at Rossal with Sandy Macdonald!

"It is a strange story, if you like," he said, "but no romance. A romance is unreal, this is not. I don't wonder at you thinking so; anybody would. Well, I told Barney what was in the letters. I was unbelieving too, but he was convinced from the first that it was true as gospel; and when I said it was all a part of Rendall's 'wanderings'—the offspring of the fevered brain of a poor chap gone crazy with pain and hunger and thirst and loneliness, Barney argued against me, saying why believe in that part of the letter and not in the rest. I was too weak to hold out against him, and anyway we might as well go to Tati as anywhere else. Then Barney, who had either himself been, or who had listened to others who had been, at every diggings or mine in the world, remembered something about Tati, but the something was not favourable. He said there were several old workings there of unknown age; and away back in '69 or '70 miners had gone to the place, but had not been very fortunate. He thought there were still men at work in the district. Then he had often heard of the old ruins of forts and build-

ings of hewn stone scattered over the country—places that had been erected in the long-ago, of whose builders and makers even tradition had left no word. But the dumb stones spoke of a time when a great race had possessed the land. 'They say it's Solomon's Sheba'—so Barney called that dim picturesque figure of history—'that built thim, an' faith you can niver till.' In any case Barney was sure that our business was to go to Tati as soon as ever we could, and he was as happy as a lark."

"One moment, Mr Irwin," I interposed, for a thought had occurred to me. "I notice you always speak of Barney in the past tense. What has become of him?"

"Barney is dead," Irwin replied, with sombre look.

"That is very unfortunate," said I. But his point of view was not the same as mine, for he answered—

"Life is good, but there are worse things than being dead."

"He would have been another witness," I said, suggestively.

Irwin merely nodded, and said, "Yes, that's true." Then, seeing what I was hinting at, he added, "For the matter of that, I have not been able to find Mrs Rendall. I made inquiries; she has left Natal; but I mean to find her if she lives. Mr Macdonald, the banker, is looking out for her, and he has many correspondents. But, I take it, a woman and a child cannot vanish utterly like a man, and they will certainly be heard of."

"Did you tell Mr Macdonald your story?" I asked.

"Just as much as was good for him, and no more," he replied. "He has in his vault a sealed packet I left in his charge. There are in it copies of the Rendall letters, and a more detailed de-

scription of the property than poor Jack gave. Mr Macdonald has instructions to open that packet after a certain lapse of time, if he does not hear from me."

This sounded all right. "You found the property, then? Of course you did," I said.

"Yes. Rendall's account helped us, but it was not such an easy matter as you might suppose. There was not much difficulty in getting from Tuli to Tati, and I improved in health every day. Barney's confidence and high spirits were the best of tonics. When we got to Tati our troubles began. We found the very hill with the ruin on its summit exactly as Rendall had spoken of it, and the identical spot in it he had mentioned, and I was no longer unbelieving. But when we got to the clump of trees we searched long and vainly for the reef. I should never have discovered it, and I can only account for Rendall's doing so by his having stumbled on it by pure accident; but Barney, who had the true instinct for gold—there is such a thing—found a reef. I suppose it is Rendall's, but that we could not say. I have told you I know nothing about mining, but Barney did. He said it was a true fissure vein, a mother vein, he thought; and I know he believed it was rich enough to satisfy a glutton for gold. He said it would be the 'makin' av us,' and of hundreds more. There is more of it than one or two men can manage. That was his idea, but it was not his fate to see the proof of it, for he took that everlasting malarial fever, the curse on the white man in the black man's country, and died in my arms. I did all I could for him—you may be sure of that. But he went out well

content. 'Shure it's a hape of trouble I'm lavin' you,' he said, 'an' it's myself that's sorry for you, my lad.' That was like Barney, sir; he thought of me to the end, and very little of himself. The last words he said were, 'You'll find the widdy, poor soul, an' make it aisey for her.' Now, sir, I shall tell you a strange thing. I make no pretence to be an angel or to be too good a man, but I think I am not a bad man. And yet I have had one long-continued struggle with myself about Mrs Rendall. An inward voice—devil, if you like, for surely it must be a devil—has been with me constantly, whispering night and day that I need not give myself any concern for her. It says a man can never have too much, and that no one can compel me to give her a farthing, and so on. Is that what gold does, sir? Sometimes I have listened to that voice with complacency, thinking what a sensible voice it was; then, again, I have tried to silence it. And, by God!" he cried with a sudden fierce burst of passion, "I shall silence it. You see, sir, it is a great temptation,—I could not have believed it of myself; and that I cared for Mary Rendall at one time does not help me in the least, but rather the reverse."

Now, I will admit that a mem-

ber of the House is not a specially skilled physician of the soul, and I brought the conversation back to the land of common-sense by saying, "But isn't that all a little premature? You have got nothing out of the property as yet." Then I fell back on a famous question. "What are you going to do about it?" I asked.

"No, sir," he replied, "that is not the question; the question is, What are *you* going to do about it? Take a day or two to think it over." And he rose to go.

"Drop in to-morrow afternoon," I said, "or next day, and we can have a chat at any rate."

"Yes, I'll call the day after to-morrow for your answer. I think I know what it will be."

"Well, I don't know," I replied, doubtfully, not meaning anything in particular. This I said with a smile, as I felt I had been scarcely courteous to the parting guest. "You see it is almost easier to find a mine in Africa than to get a broker like myself, who is not in the mining line, to handle one,"—which I saw on second thoughts did not greatly atone for my want of politeness. But I was much disturbed in mind by all that I had heard.

"There are others," he retorted, quietly, and I felt paid back with interest.

IV.—THE HOUSE DOES THE REST.

I went to bed that night with the resolution taken to have nothing to do with Mr Irwin and his mine. Let him go to the "others." I had thought the matter over carefully after he had left me, trying hard to disentangle from my ideas of it all the wonderful part of the tale—that is, to look at it

from the strictly business point of view. But in the morning it seemed that my brain had been working over the ground again while I slept, and the whole thing wore a different aspect. I told myself now that I had not taken sufficient account of the character of the man, and had given too

much weight to the abnormal nature of his story. There are more things in heaven and earth, as we know on high authority; and, granting that I could break away from the well-marked-out path I had hitherto trodden in the House, and take up the Rendall property, did I believe in Irwin? and that was the point I had to argue with myself. If I did believe in the man,—and I felt that I was leaning that way the more I thought of his words and manner, and especially of his quite gratuitous confidences as to how he regarded Mrs Rendall in the matter of the mine,—why should I not take a hand in what was to me so novel an undertaking? Thus was I in the position of halting between two opinions, just the time when some, probably insignificant, thing had a decisive influence; and in this case Mr Walters kindly supplied it.

It was a making-up day in the House, and we were kept fairly busy, as we had been heavily interested in an operation in American "Rails" during the preceding ten days. At length, the settlement being all arranged for, I had a long talk with Walters over Irwin's communication, most of which, however, I kept to myself. As soon as he had an inkling that I was seriously thinking of doing something in regard to it, I could see he was entirely hostile. When I had finished, he maintained, in an irritatingly respectful but most determined manner, that "our firm"—Walters' sense of proprietorship is strong—had never had anything to do with mines, had done exceedingly well without them in the past, and would continue to do so. Then he made a better point when he urged that we were known and trusted in our

own particular line both by our clients and by the House; if we went outside it, we might not stand quite so well as we did. I replied that no one need know until we were absolutely certain that we had a good thing in the property.

"Good thing in the property!" cried Walters, losing his temper a little. "Property! where? In South Africa. Property! where? In the moon. Besides," he added, more calmly, "these things always do get known. It would be found out somehow. But suppose the mine does exist, why does he not float his precious discovery in Johannesburg or in Cape Town? People there would surely know more about it than we do."

There was good sound sense in this, I admitted; but when I mentioned this objection next day to Irwin, he remarked that it was better and cheaper in the long-run to come direct to London—which is true. All the big things reach us sooner or later, and why not sooner? and the more speedily they come, the fewer barnacles will there be sticking to them. Irwin, too, had his own opinion about the stock exchanges at the mining centres.

Walters declared further that nothing was so uncertain as a mine, and he backed up his statement with the names of half-a-hundred that had brought ruin, and ruin only, to their unlucky shareholders. But, while I agreed with this, I pointed out that many others had turned out uncommonly well, and several of them at that very moment were veritable gold-mines in more senses than one. Then Walters protested there was more swindling in connection with mines than with any other class of property; why incur any risk?

Was not a mine only another name for a gamble in which somebody else always holds four aces against you? I was not aware that Walters understood anything of the game of poker, and he never would have used such an expression, and so given himself away, if he had not been carried miles out of his usual course. The phrase, however, has since served a useful purpose when in argument with him. Finally, in a tone of genuine distress, he declared "that for our firm to take up a mine would be almost a discreditable thing," and he implored me not to think of it.

Good old Walters!

"Almost discreditable!" I said, with some heat. "That is too much to say," and I brought the conversation to an end; for when one person tells another that such and such is "almost discreditable," he really means very discreditable indeed. I excused Walters, for I knew his intentions were excellent; but the words stuck in my throat, and practically settled the business. I could see nothing in the least discreditable in taking up the mine, and I then and there resolved to go into it.

Having come to a final understanding with myself, I devoted that evening, cancelling two engagements I had had for it, to the consideration of what should be my next move. For one thing, it was evident that I would have to pay a high price, and that not merely in money, for the support to be brought to the help of the undertaking in the House; and that price would have to be paid in actively allying myself with new associates and novel combinations, from which, as Walters had hinted, I might lose much and gain little. This was to take so

serious a step that it gave me pause. I was resolved, however; and I determined, as a beginning, to see Old Greybeard—not a respectful designation, but sufficiently descriptive—who was a conspicuous mining Bull, though not of the chronic variety, and who had had a wide experience in the financing of mines. I had a certain claim upon him as having indirectly rendered him a service in the ordinary course of business, and I knew he was aware of it. I had heard that he was doing very well in his own line, and had a considerable following both inside and outside the House. He certainly carried himself with a sort of blatant prosperity in his mien which confirmed the statement. I did not particularly fancy him, however, for he seemed the kind of man who was most false when he was truthful, and eminently truthful when he was most false. But he would do; I could get him. Then with regard to Irwin, I would complete my arrangements with him on the first opportunity. Of course it would be necessary to get reports, independent of his, from expert engineers, whom I would send out at once. Such reports would be needed in any case for the prospectus of the company which would be ultimately floated.

I saw Mr Greybeard early next morning, and he kindly "made time," as he said, to see me. I spoke of mining in a general way, and when he perceived there was something definite behind it, it was to my great surprise that he bade me "keep out of it." But I knew my man, and replied that all I wished him to do was to inform me where I could lay my hands on two experts who could be absolutely trusted.

"Absolutely trusted!" he exclaimed; "you should know better than that." But he said he would find me the men if I really wanted them, and added, genially, "I suppose you think you have a good thing; well, that's as may be."

I said the matter was special and private.

"It always is," he answered. "But I need not tell you that the 'special and private,' 'the inclusive information,' and all that kind of thing, are more fatal than poison. The 'straight tip' is responsible for more untimely funerals than typhoid. Nothing is quite so deadly as the 'straight tip' of a friend."

"That's all right," I said. "But send me the men as soon as possible."

Irwin called on me in the course of the day, and seemed not in the least elated when I told him that he had captured me—said, indeed, that he had expected it. In the discussion which ensued he warmly approved of sending out the experts, but rather as a means of satisfying myself than as likely to be of any real advantage. "I would sooner take," he said, "the opinion of a man like Barney, a practical prospector and miner, than of all the experts in the world. Of course," he added, "I shall go with them to Tati." Then it was settled that there should be four founders' shares, —Mrs Rendall to have two, Irwin one, and myself one. Formal agreements were drawn up in the usual way, the capital meantime being put at the modest sum of one hundred thousand pounds, of which I was to contribute ten per cent in cash. This was doing business with a rush; and I can see now on looking back that there was something jumpy and impul-

sive about my conduct in the whole affair, and that I "let myself go." To put ten thousand pounds into a hole in the ground on the faith of a man's story was a good deal to do. Yet, if you think of it, that is what hundreds of people are doing every day to a greater or less extent.

Irwin had hardly left me when Walters, looking as if he were on the edge of tears, brought in Mr Greybeard. Poor Walters' feeling of what was due "our firm" was outraged by that robust and flamboyant presence, and it was with a gesture of warning and entreaty that he withdrew.

"I have one expert for you," said Mr Greybeard, speaking of experts as if they were coals or consols. "He was close at hand luckily, and he desires me to get for the other a man at present in Colorado. He says the American is a better man than himself, the best man in the profession—which is a queer one—and as reliable as they make them."

"Get him," I said, shortly. "Money no object."

"Is it as good as that?" asked Greybeard. Then he thought a little, and presently said: "If you feel that way about the thing, it must be uncommon good. Let me stand in with you, I say. I might be useful. I know the ropes, and you don't."

This was just what I had wanted, although I had not expected to reach it so speedily; and, as I eventually agreed to the proposal, thus it was that I became identified to some extent with the mining-rings.

And here let me say a word. The mining-rings—all to the contrary, notwithstanding—are no better and no worse than others. They are in the business for what

there is in it, and not for their health. And the public—the long-suffering and so-necessary public—may depend upon it that they will get nothing from them that has any superfluous cheapness about it. People like to pay a good price for a thing, especially if they think they are getting a bargain; and there is no place where they can get these two conditions so completely satisfied as on the mining side of the Stock Exchange. And, for the rest, it is their own affair. You may think this is cynicism, but it is merely business, and in your heart you know it is.

The experts made their reports to us in due time: one was of a glowing description, while the other expressed in more cautious language a favourable opinion. It is just possible you may have seen them in the campaign literature of the Strange Chance Mining Co., Ltd. The expedition of the experts had been conducted with all possible secrecy; and, this being satisfactory, the next step was to secure possession of the property in proper form. A certain length along the reef had been pegged out, but we wished a clear title to that and a good piece more. And this was where the long arm and the heavy hand of the House had to make themselves felt.

As everybody knows, Tati, and all the immense territory about it, is in Companyland, and is owned by a powerful and enterprising semi-political and semi-commercial organisation. The terms offered us were not favourable; in fact, they were so hard that we could not consent to them for a moment. A rent-charge, even a considerable rent-charge, was fair enough—all depended on the amount asked for. But it appeared as if the Company

wanted not only the earth, but all that was therein. Representations were made that the people (we ourselves, to wit) who were interested in the Tati property were in earnest, and it was to be expected that the result of what they proposed doing would be not only to develop their own mine, but naturally others would follow in their wake, and thus the lands and other property of the Company would be materially enhanced in value. This argument was of little avail: the Company was high and mighty, and had to be taught that the House was far higher and mightier. And the lesson was well learned, and will not soon be forgotten.

Here Greybeard—who, whatever else he may or may not be, is a skilful general—and his legions were invaluable. From a rampant Bull he suddenly became first a dejected, next an almost despairing one, and then slid by easy stages into the position of a Bear, open and not ashamed. Considered merely from the artistic point of view, it was a very beautiful and finished performance. I have never seen a prettier piece of work. He may well be proud of it, for it was a dangerous game to play, especially because the public, from princes down to country solicitors and their clerks, were all taking a hand in it, and beginning to show, as they showed so unmistakably later on, that they were losing their heads; but Greybeard never flinched, for the stakes were large and juicy. Beginning with hints of impending trouble—nothing definite, but all the more potent on that account—he let it be seen that he was uneasy about the future. True, he would remark, the returns from the Randt were very good,—he would even go

so far as to allow that they were increasing; but the Randt was one thing, and Companyland was another. Too much, far too much, O wise and wily Greybeard! was being taken on trust; there was too much gambling in the whole business,—amazing language to come from Mr Greybeard, the heretofore king of the mining Bulls! And the spirits of many sank into their boots. Nor did he lack support, and that of the best kind. Many firms like my own had for similar reasons given from time to time before this anything but a favourable verdict on the Kaffir crowd and the allied land and exploration companies. And now here was Saul among the prophets! The prophets prophesied, and not in vain; the market certainly hesitated; and more than all, we knew the Company we were fighting against *must have money just then*. But our enemy was not yet delivered into our hands.

It was when the market was in this state of perplexity—not exactly a crisis, but with the feeling of it in the air—that Walters, who was not in all our secrets, and who grew more gloomy every day as he thought things in Africa were going to everlasting smash, laid on my table a paragraph cut out of the "London Letter" of a provincial newspaper. Ah, these correspondents! How useful they are, and how grateful they are! The writer spoke of what he picturesquely called the "halt in South Africans," and said that the reason for it was probably that one of the companies most heavily interested was thought to be too much dependent on one man, whose health, or at any rate whose life, was uncertain. How are these things done? Nobody knows; but this wonderful piece

of news, which was no news to any one, because it merely repeated, what was well known already, that the life of any and every man is uncertain, was immediately so distorted and magnified by the London press that the death of the gentleman referred to was expected to be telegraphed every moment. The natural result followed: the market fell rapidly; the Kaffir Circus took on the appearance of panic; Greybeard and his hosts sold, sold, sold everything in sight, while our agents quietly bought, and ever at lower prices. The Company had the greatest difficulty in getting the required funds; but it got them from a source I need not mention, and there was no more trouble about the Rendall property. Then was the heavy hand of the House removed as if by magic; and, singular coincidence, both town and country journals stigmatised the rumours of the great man's death as shameful *canards*, "gotten up for Stock Exchange purposes,"—though, from what I have said, it is perfectly plain that the rumours in question had been vamped up entirely by the newspapers themselves. The shares of the Company and of other kindred things soon stood higher than ever; and Old Greybeard, who was in reality loaded up for the "rise" through us, made a barrel of money. The only remark I can permit myself may be expressed in the words of Mr Greybeard, quoting from an American humorist, "What strange things you see when you haven't got a gun!"

I do not know that there is much more to be told. Machinery was procured, and the "stamps" made their noisy music near the mine, which was christened by me

the Strange Chance,—surely an appropriate name; and you will see in the list that the shares in it are quoted at figures that are perhaps too high even for it, considering its present large capitalisation; and you will also see, if you ever look at these things, that cables of the yield of gold come every month with unfailing regularity, and that the net returns increase every time. I never expect to be in so good a thing again,—such fortune does not come twice to any man; but I bless the accident that sent me to Rossal with Sandy Macdonald, and for cause.

Of course, too, you have seen Mrs Rendall and Mamie, who is a sweet child, in the opera-box with Mr Irwin; you know, therefore, that they were discovered, and enriched, and are now in England—the work of one good and loyal man. I daresay it would be nice to round off this narrative with the intelligence of the approach-

ing marriage of Mary Rendall and Charles Irwin, and that they are about to build one of these great African palaces in the West End of which you read, and at the estimated cost of which you gape and stare and all the world wonders. This would indeed be a grand coming into their kingdom. I know nothing of this, nor prophesy even—preferring to do that when the fit season arrives in the House, and in the House alone, where sometimes prophecies come true. In any case, I have done what I set out to do: I have told the story of the man who did not look particularly clever, and of these his friends, with such clearness as I possess. And, above all, and this is nearest my heart, I have vindicated the honour and glory of the House; and, believe me, the Strange Chance Mine is only one out of a thousand episodes which establish anew and sustain its dominance of the world.

HEGEL AT JENA.

(OCTOBER 14, 1806.)

"On the day of the battle of Jena, amid the thunder of the artillery, he wrote the last words of the 'Phenomenology of the Spirit,' his first great original book, the crown of his Jena career."—Schwegler, 'History of Philosophy,' p. 321.

"Das Manuskript war am Abend vor der Jenaer Schlacht vollendet, Hegel in seinen Gedanken versunken, hatte von der grossen Katastrophe nichts vernommen, und wollte es am folgenden Tage seinem Verleger überbringen, als er durch in die Stadt eindringende französische Truppen angehalten wurde."—Frantz und Hillert, 'Hegel's Philosophie,' xiv.

On the fourteenth October, at Jena town—
Oh, we remember the day full well—
The Eagle of France on her prey swept down,
And the pride of Prussia fell.

In that hour of the foemen's victory,
At Jena town, 'mid the battle's throes,
Was Hegel's 'Phänomenologie
Des Geistes' brought to its close.

For Hegel heard not the roar of strife,
He saw not the battle's smoke and flame,
Sunk too deep in his spirit life,
And the book that made his fame.

For what to him was a battle fought,
A kingdom won, or a crown resigned,
At strife himself with the kings of thought,
Borne on with the march of mind?

Now, eager to let them see the light,
He sallies forth with his crowded sheets;
And learns at length of the fateful fight,
For the Frenchmen throng the streets.

The battle is won; but the book must wait,
The world is too busy to heed it now;
For books, like men, have their hour of fate;
And the proudest to fate must bow.

It is lost awhile in the storm of deeds,
In the noise and the triumph of the fray :
But the book, with its message that no man heeds,
May live for the longer day.

For what, in turn, is the conqueror's fate?
The star of his glory is quenched in gloom ;
And leaves but a heritage of hate,
In which France may yet find her doom !

What was nought, becomes ; what was all, is nought :
For Hegel's thought as a deed is known ;
And the warrior's deed is but empty thought,
As the test of time hath shown.

W. H. K.

THE ROMANTIC MOVEMENT IN FRENCH ART.

THE reluctance of corporate bodies of artists to recognise the merit of a new phase of art, whether it be embodied in the work of one man or in that of a group, is, to the genuine lover of the beautiful, one of the most distressing results which follow the founding of privileged societies. It is only when the pressure from without becomes too strong for them, and after the art of the men they have doubted and rejected is accepted by the art public, that they unwillingly unbar the doors. One of the most notable events of this century was the upheaval in French art known as the Romantic movement. It fought and gained its battle in France long ago, and for many years (even before it was appreciated at home) the pictures of its leaders had been prized in this country and in America, by all who know what true art is, as among the greatest of all time. Ten years ago there was brought together in Edinburgh a collection of pictures of this school, the memory of which will ever remain precious to all who saw it; and in London, in Glasgow, and elsewhere there have been from time to time charming little gatherings of the work of some member or members of the group. But it is only this year that the Royal Academy has seen fit to admit the art of these great men to the Old Masters' Exhibition. The recognition is tardy, but acceptable, for nothing is so reassuring to the great British public as the imprint of that oft-erring, but ever-powerful, institution. And it is to be hoped that the action of the Academy foreshadows more important and permanent recogni-

tion in the acquisition for the National Gallery of pictures representative of French art from David to Manet.

Throughout the eighteenth century decadence marked the art of France. Here and there an individual man sustained the tradition of elegance and grace, and retained the fine sentiment and feeling which had characterised the work of earlier French painters; but for the most part the artistic talent of the nation had been wasted on trivial or worthless themes. In France the life of the people, but more particularly the Government of the day (owing to so much patronage being in its hands), has always moulded contemporary art, and the false and debased taste of the Regency and Louis XV. mars all, or nearly all, the art of their time. The gallery in the Louvre devoted to pictures of this period is one of the most dismal and depressing in Europe. The technique is mere dexterous trickery, affectation and triviality of thought abound, and depravity of motive is painfully in evidence. Elegance, which is the dominant characteristic of French eighteenth-century work, is too thin a cloak to hide the poverty-stricken thought, and daintiness of execution is often used to give point to underlying grossness. In everything there is more of the studied simpering elegance of the courtier than of the spontaneous grace of nature, more of the shallow and artificial than of the simple and profound; and although far more graceful in form and accomplished in design and execution than the prints one is offered on the Boulevards to-day, the inspiring spirit is the same. From this

alough only two men, Watteau and Ohardin, completely emerge,—for Pater is weighted down by a grossness somewhat akin to Boucher's, Lancret is wanting in charm, and Greuze, despite his efforts to raise the moral influence of art by purity of subject, is, as a rule, too literary and didactic, and on the technical side too lacking in mastery, to be counted a great artist. Chardin's *genre* pictures have a delightful simplicity of feeling and motive; there is no striving after dramatic effect as with Greuze, and little of the affectation of his time. Indeed some of his subjects display a sentiment as charming, as naïve and homely, as Pinwell's. He was a gifted colourist, with a preference for subtly varied schemes of grey; he composed well, and his paint has a quality and beauty which are very rare. While Chardin is thus somewhat apart from his contemporaries in both subject and style, Watteau used the same material as they did; but beneath his touch the grossness disappeared. It was not so much that he dignified the fashionable life around him, as that he breathed into its courtly graces and frivolities the sweet and pensive character of his own nature. The daintiness of his touch and the sparkle of his colour were fit accompaniment to the spirit of his thought. The delicately varied tints of landscape and sky, the stronger and clearer notes that brightly costumed figures make against this setting, the rhythmic charm of his composition, and a certain pensive gaiety of heart underlying all, make his pictures wondrous attractive. In them the elegant artificiality of the period is combined with a feeling for nature, a charm of colour, and a delicacy of handling, which are quite personal. They are the supreme expression of boudoir art.

In France, art, like society, was tottering to its fall when the Revolution burst and hastened the end. The spirit, of which the Revolution was the political outcome, had also, as in the pictures of Greuze and Vien, been working beneath the surface of the art world; and with the fall of the Empire these aspirations took definite shape. The art so long dedicated to the whims and caprices of the aristocracy began, under the impulse of the new environment, to express the sentiments and ideals of the common people. Cut off from the past by the sword of retribution, in the turmoil of the present they sought inspiration for the future in the great acts of patriotism of the Romans. And the general intelligence of Europe, interested in the discoveries at Pompeii, gave it form on its artistic side. These feelings and aspirations seemed to become incarnate in the work of Jacques Louis David. A friend of Robespierre, and a leader in the Revolution party, he, on the collapse of the movement, narrowly escaped with his life. But with the rise of Napoleon, who appointed him his painter-in-chief, his influence again became paramount; and despite the many phases art has undergone, and the innumerable cliques into which painters have divided in the interval, it is still, modified and touched by reality, a living force in French art. David's conception of pictorial art was somewhat cold and lifeless: he led his *confrères* back, not to nature, but to antiquity as expressed in sculpture. Respect for the achievements of the past underlay all his work, and paralysed his invention and resource. His work displays a vigour of expression, and an interest in life, which are refreshing after the

vapidity of the eighteenth century; but what he really did for French art was to fix its base in form, and in doing this he had the best of material—the natural bent of the national mind—to work upon. In art, as in literature, the genius of the French people inclines to form and order, and in painting they have surpassed all modern nations in drawing and design. Every one round David felt the spell, and classicism became all but universal in France, and indeed may be said to have dominated all Europe except Britain, where Reynolds, Gainsborough, and Raeburn, Turner and Constable, were producing their masterpieces. The greater among his followers put something of themselves into their pictures; but as a whole the work of the school is too much akin to sculpture to be truly picturesque, too pedantic to charm, and too far removed from natural emotion to move us. But one pupil was destined to take up the work of David, and carry it to finer issues and more beautiful results than any his master ever attained. This was Ingres, a painter in whose work all the peculiar merits of the French school are at their highest. He took up form where David left it, and breathed into it the breath of reality and the life of style. In his work admiration for the perfect ideal forms of antique art was tempered by an appreciation, genuine enough, although not keen and deep, of the beauty of nature. As a draughtsman Ingres has never been excelled. His knowledge of form was real, and it was controlled by exquisite taste, and expressed with the rarest style. His pictures, in all that relates to form, and expression through line and form, are as near perfect as possible;

but they leave one strangely unmoved. The pleasure one derives from them is coldly intellectual; it is like the interest one takes in the clear and elegant expression of an idea which has no emotional appeal. The intense interest of reality and the wonderful colour and glamour of romance are lacking. Thus the people who take part in the "*Homère déifié*" seem to have no interest in their own action: thus there is no passion, either of colour or feeling, in the picture of "*Oedipe*"; he stands as coolly and as unmoved as the model did on the studio-floor, and the figure of Enigma fails to suggest the keeper of secret things and the concealer of the future,—it suggests nothing ominous, nothing of dread import. On the other hand, "*La Source*" is charming; the long and deftly modulated line from elbow to foot on the left, the equally delightful broken line made by the bend at the waist on the other side, the perfect form and proportions of the girl's figure, and the pure calm face, are beautiful. It was in such pictures, which in motive and sentiment approached near sculpture without losing touch with life, that Ingres was at his best; and it was this ideal of picture-making which held sway in France. It dominated the Salons, and, through the power thus placed at its disposal, it attempted to strangle all variation as heresy. It virtually dictated the subject, and required uniformity of treatment.

The first note of sincere dissent was struck by Géricault, when he sent his "*Raft of the Medusa*" to the Salon of 1819. Gros, indeed, had in some of his Napoleonic pictures shown an inclination to express natural passion, but had not pursued it far, so this picture of Géricault's really marks a turn-

ing-point in French art. The intense feeling embodied in it forms a wonderful foil to the impassiveness of David's "Sabine Women," which hangs in the same room in the Louvre. There also reappears in it the emotional element of chiaroscuro, which had been almost banished by the classic school, and the colour strikes a chord in complete sympathy with the tragedy of the situation. The whole incident is well conceived: the elements of nature, the wild heaving of the sea, the lowering sky with its bright rifts, are attuned to the mingled despair and hope of the forlorn creatures on the raft. A few years later Delacroix exhibited his first picture, and the battle between Romanticism and those in authority began in grim earnest. One can easily imagine the consternation, the angry wrangling, the wordy war, which the appearance of this picture stirred. The passion of the colour and the drama of the light and shade, the vigorous and suggestive drawing, and the full yet fluent *impasto*, were new and startling to painters trained in a school where a convention of form and a certain restricted range of emotion and subject were enforced. The classic movement inaugurated by David and continued by Ingres purged French art of the vapid trivialities in which it had sunk, and set up a higher ideal; but it was at the expense of liberty, in whose sacred name it claimed the right to reign. It was against the cold formalism of this school that the men of 1830 had to contend.

The name Romanticists, often applied to all the men whose artistic career is commonly dated from 1830, is much more applicable to the figure-painters, Géricault, Delacroix, and Monticelli, than to the rustic and landscape

artists. The designs of these men and the atmosphere of thought in which their pictures are steeped are truly romantic, while the quality of the others is rather that of the imaginative interpretation of the familiar. English art and artists played a great part in this renaissance, and the influence of Constable, whose work, along with that of Bonington, was exhibited in the Salon of 1824, was particularly stimulating in the second direction. He revealed, as it were in a flash, to these young painters groping for the light, that the way toward it was the one which led direct to nature. The Romantic movement was a struggle for liberty of imagination, for freedom from convention—in a word, for individuality in art. It is individual experience of life and personal feeling which create the atmosphere through which art reveals the world. Feeling and expression, again, depend on temperament, and that of these reformers was such that it rebelled against the strangling convention of a pseudo-classicism. First, Gros introduced truth of circumstance and costume; then Géricault, more bold, added freedom of gesture and chiaroscuro; finally Delacroix and the later Romanticists not only laid the keystone of colour, but carried each of the others further. Thus the new ideals revealed themselves pictorially in essential truth of presentment and expressive gesture, and in dramatic light and shade and a passion for colour. Of these the two last are the most essential elements of romance: without the glorious vesture of colour we have only a bare narration of facts; without the transfiguring glamour of chiaroscuro the very facts themselves have no artistic relationship to one another. Artistically it is the

presence of these qualities, added to depth of poetic feeling, which separates the work of this group from that of the main body of the French school. All Delacroix's pictures are pregnant with romance, yet everything he did was based on nature, and the relationship to it is clear. But the intensity of his feeling sublimated the whole; and impetuous technique, glowing colour, eloquent gesture, and grand composition all contribute in reflecting the painter's passion, and in stirring the feelings of the beholder. His mind was more in sympathy with the weirdness and twilight mystery of the northern peoples than the clear and sunny temperament of the southern, and his pictures more often thrill than charm. Delacroix suffered from the defects of his merits; his drawing was more expressive than correct, his colour, if bold and brilliant, was a little wanting in subtilty, and his use of light and shade was occasionally almost melodramatic; but these very exaggerations are the obvious indications of the romantic spirit in art, and make him in many respects the typical man. In him the aspirations of the Romantic school seemed to reach a climax, to be ever at white-heat. In the work of Decamps we find much the same intensity of spirit. Although he never quite overcame his lack of proper training, he had great natural ability and painted with remarkable nerve, while he was a good colourist and a master of the pictorial effects of light and shade. Brought up in the country, he loved it well, and many of the finest things he did were landscapes. Decamps was fond of travel, and his pictures of the East awakened a new interest in the Orient and opened up a new field for art.

On the other hand, although Delaroche started as an adherent of the new movement, he never really belonged to it. He lacked the imagination of a Delacroix, the poetic instinct of a Corot, or the love of veracity of a Millet. With him art was but the handmaiden of literature, or a mirror in which was reflected the corporeal embodiment by models in correct costume of some historic event. While Delacroix seized on the pictorial possibilities of an incident, and reproduced the effect it had had on his own strong nature, Delaroche, cool, collected, correct, merely illustrated the author's words. He was ambitious, but was never more than a good and somewhat commonplace illustrator on a large scale. Ary Scheffer, also, was never genuinely in sympathy with romance. His feeling was, because he usually chose religious subjects, what it is fashionable to call elevated; but it was not strongly poetic or convincingly sincere. He was in no sense a colourist; his drawing was correct but characterless, his handling timid, and his pictures remain to make one wonder why he was ever esteemed other than a man of good intentions who happened to paint.

In the domain of landscape, the influence of the new movement was destined to be great. The classicism of Claude (who was virtually Italian) and of Poussin had been weakened under Joseph Vernet and Hubert Robert by an admixture of artificiality; and during the *régime* of David landscape was far too simple a thing to deserve attention. There was one man, however, who just before the dawn seems to have felt in some subtle way the coming renaissance. In the work of George Michel there are stirrings of the

romantic spirit which was to inform the art of his successors. In the great desolate plains, under ominous cloud-piled skies, in the mill-crowned summits rising in solemn darkness against skies of ashen hue, in the mysterious woodlands, and the rich low-toned colour that he loved, there is more than a far-off echo of the coming change. But his work was unappreciated save by a very few; and beautiful though it is in itself, it counts for little in the evolution of landscape art. Now, however, that reality and poetry had revived figure-painting, the time seemed ripe for a blossoming in landscape.

Before Constable, landscape-painting was unemotional,—it was an expression of abstract beauty, not a sympathetic rendering of a mood or the interpretation of a dominant characteristic. Nature was a thing apart from man, and did not enter into his experience or colour his daily life. Previous to this century only a few painters, of whom Ruysdael and Gainsborough are perhaps the chief, had fully felt the passion and beauty of natural scenery; but with the rise of the British school and its influence, through Constable and others, in France, landscape for its own sake became a common theme in art. In France, Theodore Rousseau led the movement. To him Nature was a living thing, to which his own grave spirit answered responsive. The rapture of dawn, the glory of high noon, the splendour of sunset, the wonder of the night, and the ever-varying moods of the seasons as they passed in procession across her face, thrilled him to the depths of his soul. He lived so close to "Nature with the bountiful breasts," that the strength of her being seemed to pass into his pictures.

A heroic note of life peals through his forest glades, and echoes among his much-loved mountains of Auvergne. No man ever delighted in the strength of Nature more than he, and none has given it nobler expression; for, if he sometimes descended to a style of work painfully suggestive of a tea-tray, his successful pictures reveal a wonderful knowledge of form, a remarkable power and decision of handling, great skill in composition, and splendidly sombre colour. After a stubbornly contested battle, natural and romantic landscape forced its way into the Salon; but the long struggle had told terribly on Rousseau, and may be said to have shortened his life. But his work was done, the breach had been made, the citadel of artificial landscape had fallen.

While to Rousseau Nature spoke of energy and life, to Corot, the other great landscapist of the school, she whispered her secret of fairy loveliness: the one conceived an epic, the other sang a long and subtly varied lyric. No one ever saw woodland scenery quite as beautifully as Corot. Rousseau's vision was more heroic, Constable's more manly and real, and Ruysdael's more profound; but as a record of the poetry of the greenwood, what can compare with his? In it are mingled in most pictorial form the material beauty of wild Nature, and the spiritual fascination and charm which myth and fairy tale have woven in the woods. From the simplest elements he could make a magic song, perfect in rhythm, lovely in colour, and balanced in thought. The melody they breathe is that of gently wavering trees, of half-revealed forest glades, of sleeping waters, and dim distant valleys. Before his pictures one's thoughts are sent a-dreaming, and absent from them,

they return to haunt the memory. And his manner is as gracious as his thought is delightful. He seemed to be born with the sense of proportion and fitness fully developed, and his earliest pictures are almost as perfect in design as his latest. Some of the landscapes painted in Rome recall Claude in composition and handling, but there is in them all the difference which separates personal and impersonal art. Next to this perfection of arrangement, the greatest charm of Corot's pictures lies in technique. It is so perfect that one does not know it exists. It ripened with the years: his handling became more assured, his drawing more sympathetic, his colour sweeter, finally, the tightness which marked his early work gave place to a masterly suggestiveness. He lived in a land of dreams, and while his pictures may not have the healthy smack and robustness of some other masters, while they may be a little febrile and a trifle weak, they are dreams which transfigure realities, and they reveal, as nothing before ever did, the hidden and haunting spirit of twilight.

Millet takes his place beside these masters of modern art. Intellectually he was the greatest of the band, for to him were disclosed not only the secrets of Nature, but of man's relationship to her. The old Dutchmen painted the people, but left the deeper poetry of life out; they recorded the trivial daily acts, but failed to grasp their full significance and beauty. His triumph was to re-create man's relation to Nature on a higher plane. He was the first poet-painter of the everyday event and of the common people, the laureate of man's struggle for existence with the obstinate earth. This fellowship between man and Nature is in-

deed the artistic discovery of our century, and its most distinctive, if not its greatest, art will be the pictures in which Millet and Israels, Mason, Walker, and M'Taggart, have shown the beauty and meaning of the commonplace, and the work of some dozen landscape-painters. If Millet's thought sometimes overweighed his power to express it, and frequently his paint is rotten in quality and without charm, he had a wonderful feeling for noble style, and the dignity of his peasants is as great and more profound than that of a Greek statue. He possessed an intuitive sense for the dramatic use of light and shade, and the charm of his rosy grey colour-schemes, which seem to breathe the spirit in which he himself took life, is very great.

In Dupré and Daubigny the personal poetry is less, the emotional appeal feebler. Each felt the beauty of Nature, and each painted well; but neither rose in either respect to the height of his fellows. Daubigny was among the first to practise the theory of natural values, and all his pictures, if not studiously, are at least completely correct in this respect. It was this and the power over natural effects it brought, coupled with his facility of execution and his comparatively commonplace view of things, which made him, in his own time, the most popular painter of the group, and the greatest influence outside. But he was more than an accomplished workman, he was an admirable artist. He caught the atmosphere of Nature well, and felt her simpler poetry; he composed skilfully, and his colour, if not exceptionally fine, was always agreeable. River-scenery had special attractions for him, and his many pictures of the Seine valley reproduce, vividly and sympathetically, the character of

that charming district. In Dupré's work, on the other hand, we find sentiment more important than technique, and colour more precious than form. He delighted in simple landscape, in tree-shadowed cottages, calm pastorals, and wood-fringed pools; but the fitful sea had also its charms, and some of his finest pictures depict its ever-restless face.

Monticelli, who is usually spoken of as a Romanticist, seems at first sight only connected with the school by colour and handling. To almost all of these painters man and Nature were full of meaning and significance; to him they were only so much colour. To Millet and Delacroix man in his struggle with Nature was a noble and heroic object—their pictures throb with humanity and its issues; to Monticelli he was but the coloured garments he wore: to Rousseau and Corot Nature was a living spirit which responded to man's moods; to him she was but the pretext for a colour-scheme. And yet, despite the limitations of his sympathies, his pictures are precious to us. They may not appeal to our intelligence or to the higher side of our imagination, but they express the craving we all have for pure beauty. And such a painter is necessary, now and then, to show us the great and abiding part the sensuous plays in art, to prove how great the charm of handling and colour is. But such a manifestation as this would have been impossible in France before 1830: it required the emancipation of the imagination, which came at that time, to bring, or at least permit, this absorption in splendid colour; and so Monticelli is really of the movement. In a certain sense, too, he is perhaps the most romantic of them all; for if his work has not human

interest, it possesses in high degree that suggestiveness which stimulates a personal and romantic interpretation. In the work of Diaz, who exerted a considerable influence on Monticelli, sensuous beauty holds a hardly less important place. It is, however, only of figure-pieces, in which a decorative intention predominates, and in pictures of flowers, which he used as a motive for gorgeous colour, that it can truly be said. His landscapes, often inspired by the forest of Fontainebleau, occasionally touch that heroic chord which was peculiarly Rousseau's; and at least one little picture, in which a demon pack pours through a darksome glade in an enchanted forest, stirs one's blood, and awakens something of the same dread thrill as an old Norse Saga. He was not a strong draughtsman, but a certain *abandon* of style, with his magnificent colour and suggestive handling, make his pictures interesting and beautiful exceedingly.

Two animal-painters of exceptional merit are more or less associated with the school. Jacques' pictures of farmyards and sheepfolds, of pastorals and woodlands, with their beautifully drawn figures and sheep, have much subjective interest, for he had a real interest in Nature and a fine understanding of animal life. But he was completely incapable of appreciating colour, and it is difficult to recall one picture of his which is not leaden in colour and uninteresting in handling. Occasionally, however, he laid aside the brush for the etching-needle, and his work at once became satisfactory. Revealed through a sympathetic medium, his simplicity and sincerity of sentiment are charming. Taking everything into consideration, Troyon is perhaps the greatest

painter of animals the world has seen. His pictures are not so famous as Paul Potter's: they may not have the popular appeal of Landseer's, or be so widely admired as Rosa Bonheur's; but as studies of animal life they are truer, and as pictures they are incomparably finer. His pictorial treatment of animals is remarkable: he did not look on them as a separate part of creation, but regarded them not only in their relation to man, but to Nature also. There was a strain of poetry in his soul, and, without being consistently poetic, he sometimes almost touched the epic note. His designs have something of monumental grandeur in them; he was keenly appreciative of strength of structure and massive proportion, and drew with vigour and style; his painting was accomplished, and his colour always

fine and occasionally even splendid.

All the great men who made the Romantic movement of 1830 are dead, and now their influence has all but disappeared in France. But they have left us the greatest work their nation has achieved in art, and their influence, if inoperative at home, still exercises power abroad, as many a fine Dutch and Scottish picture proves. The din of controversy is almost forgotten, the great upheaval of poetic realism and romance is a thing of the past. First angrily opposed, then tolerated, accepted, and admired, the movement, which was too personal for the Academic taste of France, was again enfolded in the bosom of the sea of convention; but the pictures it produced remain to witness that it was a supreme moment in art.

HOW TO READ.

"Few men learn the highest use of books."

—JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

AFTER all, what is reading but an attempt to understand another mind? If so, to discuss *How to Read* is to discuss how best we may enter into the spirit and thoughts of another.

In real life, when we really wish to strengthen our relationship with an acquaintance or a friend, we usually take great pains in the process. We are not satisfied with a few jerky sentences shouted at the top of our voices over an ice at an afternoon tea. Inanities between *entrées* at a dinner only exasperate us. We think three dances with two extras at a ball all too little. A *tête-à-tête* on the staircase only makes us crave another in the corridor (I speak as a man). We call on rainy days, when the probability is that no one else will be there, and we persuade what people call the "object of our attentions" to come into a corner and sit opposite the window. We all know with what persistence this little game of chance—and skill—is played. Well, why not the same with a book? Bacon likens good books to "true friends, that will neither flatter nor dissemble." "Books," says Milton, "are not absolutely dead things, but do contain a potencie of life in them to be as active as that soule was whose progeny they are; nay, they doe preserve as in a violl that purest efficacie and extraction of that living intellect that bred them." If so, a good book is not a thing to be judged of by a cursory glance. It often takes a long time and much insight to understand and enter into the char-

acter of another. It is the same with many a book. Into a good book a great man puts the best part of his mind; it may need not a little trouble on the part of a smaller mind to become acquainted with it.

But suppose we first ask, quite simply and candidly, What is the object of our reading?—to answer which simple-looking question would perhaps to some people be a puzzle indeed. Reading, to some people, is a mere pass-time, a mere kill-time, we might call it. I was travelling not long ago with a portly matron, the mother of great grown-up sons and daughters, and in a fair way towards being a grandmother, who told me quite artlessly that what she loved above all things was reading love-stories. Well, at her age perhaps that was, after all, not so unhealthy a taste. It showed, at all events, that she had settled her creed; had formed her ideas, or was content to lack ideas, about the constitution of the world and its relation to its Maker; was untroubled by misgivings as to whether she had gained correct, or gained any, estimates of science or philosophy, of history or art: she had done her work in the world, and was now resting from her labours and reading stories. And I see no valid reason why she should not. She had no need to develop the intellect or to expand the emotions. At her age experience was ripe and the mind matured, and the store of information she had laid up was doubtless sufficient for all the purposes of her life. But for youth and health and strength, for young

far below that of Milton, Ruskin, or Sir Thomas Browne. Seventy years ago Hazlitt complained of the "rage manifested by the greater part of the world for reading New Books"; and thirty years ago "we cannot read, . . . we have despised literature," averred Mr Ruskin. So it is no new thing this avidity for novelty. But I doubt whether it was worth a whole denunciatory essay by Hazlitt, or two diatribic lectures by Ruskin. For myself, I should be inclined to say of the confirmed novel-reader as was said of Ephraim, he is joined to idols, let him alone. For it will be found, as a rule, that those who read nothing but new books rarely know a good book from a bad one. Carlyle was fond of dividing books as, in the New Testament, is divided humanity, into sheep and goats. Well, the reader addicted to fiction is not likely to recognise even this broad distinction, and perhaps, when a slave to his habit, will even prefer goat to sheep. Another characteristic of the devourer of the ephemeral novel is that he or she rarely remembers anything but the shadowy impression left by such perusal; so much so, that one might not unhandsomely compare the effect upon the mind of such vapid reading to the shadows cast upon the earth by passing clouds, which only obscure the vivifying sunlight of a truly good and great author. Nothing is more certain than that you cannot have sunlight and a sky full of clouds at one and the same time. A long course of minor authors creates a distaste for a great one. The effect of a great author on a mind unclouded it is indeed a pleasure to see. Some months ago I lent to a young lady my five volumes of Jowett's translation of

Plato,—it was her first introduction to Plato. To-day I received from her a note, and in it this is what she says—I hope she will pardon my quoting her if this she should ever chance to see: "How much I have enjoyed the study of Plato! There is something so elevating; he opens up such astounding fields of thoughts, that one cannot help feeling how impossible it would be to read him and not feel the mind expanding, the nature deepening, and the aspirations becoming higher." That was the effect upon her of this sun of literature. And she was all unaware that she was merely endorsing Emerson. "Plato," says Emerson—

"Plato, in whom you may read all that in thought modern Europe has realised, and has yet to realise; even Romanism and Calvinism are there; nothing escapes him; all the suggestions of modern humanity, political economy—all are there. If you wish to see both sides; to find justice done to the man of the world, and to the sentiments of truth and religion, read Plato. Why should not young men be educated on this book? It would suffice for the tuition of the race; there need no other book to educate their understanding, or to express their reason; and these are only a part of his merits. There are pictures of the best persons, sentiments, and manners by the first master, in the first times of the world."

Nevertheless, in this Noachian deluge of mediocre literature that to-day covers Europe and America, when our neighbours, and even our pet friends, are talking of the Dialogues, not of Plato, but of Dolly, it requires, I grant, some little courage to be able to say, No; I have not read 'Those Infernal Triplets,' or 'The Black Chrysanthemum.' Yet we may be quite sure that if once the taste has been educated up to appreciating

Plato, 'Those Infernal Triplets' or 'The Black Chrysanthemum' may be read with impunity—nay, with profit perhaps, for they will not fascinate, much less enthrall. Besides, perhaps the best feature of such taste is that then worse things than frivolous and sophistical novels will have no power to allure. English women "with a purpose" may imitate the outspokenness of Roman satirists of the first century, and Frenchmen with no purpose may imitate the unidealistic details of Greek romancers of the second; but neither will wholly divert us from the best that has been thought and written. But it is only when the taste has thus been truly formed that we can safely follow the advice of Plato's panegyrist, to "read that which we love, and not waste our memory over a crowd of mediocrities," otherwise we shall love the mediocrities, and, like Noah's unbelieving audience, find ourselves hopelessly floundering in the flood.

However, the question, What to read? I do not intend to ask or to attempt to answer here. We may, if we like, follow Sir John Lubbock in his hundred books, or we may follow Comte, or we may follow his disciple Mr Frederic Harrison, or any one of the cloud of witnesses that the 'Pall Mall Gazette' generated some years ago. But if we are wise, perhaps we shall follow our own inclinations. And in so doing we shall be following no less an authority than Dr Samuel Johnson. "A man ought to read," said Johnson, "just as inclination leads him; for what he reads as a task will do him little good." A remarkable utterance that, when we remember that it was made by the author of the English Dictionary and the 'Lives of the Poets,' works that perhaps

more than any other two in English literature necessitated reading "as a task." But if we are to look to inclination as a safe guide, inclination should previously be educated up to the highest point attainable by each of us by a thorough course of classical authors; only then can we follow our inclinations unfettered, because only then can we rely upon the purity of our taste in literature. Culture, said Matthew Arnold, is acquaintance with the best that has been thought and written; to which perhaps might be added, composed, painted, and built. Well, the cultured reader will be the reader acquainted with the best that has been written. One could hardly apply the adjective, even in its narrowest signification, to him, however omnivorous, whose literary horizon was bounded by the evening paper at one pole and the ephemeral novel at the other. The cultured reader will be conversant with, at all events, some of the best books, and will use these as standards by which to weigh all others. And fortunately, with but few exceptions, the best books are written in the best style. No one ever said nothing well. A statue cannot be carved out of air. Fortunately, too, the cultured reader will find food for thought even in the evening paper and the ephemeral novel; but he does so because he draws nutriment from deeper things than these. No doubt in the modern drawing-room the reader devoted to modern literature can be very brilliant indeed. The gaudy orchid may live on air. But from it we do not expect, and we do not get, fruit.

Mr Frederic Harrison, in his essay of the same title with this little paper, insists as wisely as vigorously on the necessity of

knowing what not to read, even in the realms of literature proper. But that surely is a question each must answer for himself. Generally speaking, however, and apart from all questions of individual taste, a simple rule might be, Avoid what you cannot assimilate. Since the object of all reading is, or should be, mental acquisition and mental development, to adapt a natural law to the intellectual world, that reading should be eschewed which we are unable to convert into a portion of our own mental fibre. But this is a question for the individual. A Mr Davenport Adams would make excellent use of a volume of "Book Prices Current," which to the majority of us would be drier than a Hebrew grammar and equally unintelligible. To a bibliophile, I suppose, an *incunabulum* is a thing not only of beauty but of profit, be its contents what they may. What mind shall determine what another mind shall or shall not read?

Those who recommend books to others—always a difficult, sometimes a thankless, proceeding—remind one of those dietetic fanatics who persist in forcing some one certain and circumscribed form of food or cookery on all and every sort of constitution: vegetables, eggs, and milk; a chop and port wine for breakfast; gruel; raw steaks; and what not. The philo-biblical physician has always his favourite prescription. Conscientious Dr Doddridge, in a long letter "to a young lady preparing for a voyage to the Indies," gravely recommended the following: Dr Watts's 'Sermons,' his 'Discourses on the Love of God,' his 'Hymns,' his 'Psalms,' and 'Lyric Poems,'

Dr Evans's 'Christian Temper' in two volumes, and his 'Sermons to Young People,' Stennett's 'Reasonableness of Early Piety,' and Dr Wright's 'Treatise on Regeneration, and of the Deceitfulness of Sin.' "I see not well," he tells her, "how any of these can be spared."¹

When we fall into the hands of the divines, we are apt to get some pretty stiff reading recommended us. John Wesley, in writing to his niece "Sally," when "a young lady about twenty," advised her to take up the following course of reading: the Bible for two or three hours in the morning, and one or two in the afternoon; Kingswood's English Grammar; Bishop Louth's Introduction [to English Grammar]; Dilworth's Arithmetic; Randal's or Guthrie's Geographical Grammar; Watts's Logic; 'The Survey of the Wisdom of God in Creation'; the Glasgow abridgment of Mr Hutchinson's works; Rollin's 'Ancient History'; 'The Concise History of the Church'; Burnet's 'History of the Reformation'; 'The Concise History of England'; Clarendon's 'History of the Rebellion'; Neal's 'History of the Puritans'; the same author's 'History of New England'; Robertson's 'History of America'; Locke's 'Essay on the Human Understanding' [*sic*]; Malebranche's 'Search after Truth'; Spenser's 'Fairy Queen' [*sic*]; select parts of Shakespeare, Fairfax, or [!] Hoole; Godfrey of Bouillon; 'Paradise Lost'; the 'Night Thoughts,' and Young's 'Moral and Sacred Poems'; Bishop Pearson on the Creed; and the Christian Library. "By this course of study," he tells her, "you may gain all the knowledge which any reasonable Christian

¹ Miscellaneous Works, pp. 1193, 1194.

needs."¹ That, I think, is a list which would frighten even the "New Woman." What, in Wesley's opinion, an unreasonable Christian might need, it is painful to try to imagine.

There are readers and readers, and there are as many classes of readers as there are classes of minds. A literary man may perhaps choose for another literary man; though, to judge from the diversity of literary opinion which Sir John Lubbock's chosen best hundred books provoked, even this seems dubious. Mr Balfour points out a capital defect in these choices in that they take into account only or chiefly what he refers to as "the pleasures of the imagination"; and he goes on to plead for books that may be read simply to satisfy a very legitimate thirst for knowledge. "Is there not also," he asks, "the literature which satisfies the curiosity?" If these hundred books are for everybody, their choosers seem to take it for granted that everybody should be conversant with literary or æsthetic productions, and yet need not necessarily be conversant with scientific or historical productions. And yet the liberally educated gentleman of to-day is expected to know something of many fields of thought widely separated from literature proper—with political economy, for example, with the natural sciences, and with the outlines of the histories of many nations. If all these are to be individual additions to the universal list, the list appropriate to each individual will be a long one indeed.

To one definite caution, however, Mr Harrison does point

when he says that "amidst the multiplicity of books and of writers" we are "in continual danger of being drawn off by what is stimulating rather than solid."

We are indeed; and perhaps the only prophylactic is to acquire, as early in life as possible, the habit of solid reading. But this, like every other habit, is learned, as Aristotle long ago showed, only by learning it. Another help in finding out what not to read would perhaps be to follow the advice of that Friend in Council who recommended that "every man and every woman who could read at all should adopt some definite purpose in their reading." Yet even this I would not indorse too implicitly. True, to read simply for reading's sake rarely keeps the mind sufficiently alert. The man who waits for any game that may turn up is not likely to take home so good a bag as the keener sportsman. Yet I should be sorry if I were not permitted sometimes to roam the literary woods for pure enjoyment, and without any intention of bagging anything at all. Not a little most delightful instruction may surely so be gained. One can, for example, not only amuse but inform oneself in one's reading by examining how far the author reveals himself in his work—or by noticing peculiarities of phraseology or style—by learning from him the manners and modes of expression of his country and time—or even by observing methods of punctuation, none of which, perhaps, is quite worthy of being called "a definite object," yet each of which is valuable in its way.

As a rule, that book will do us the most good that requires of us the most thought. "Every book

¹ *Life and Times of John Wesley.* By Rev. L. Tyerman, vol. iii. p. 339.

we read," says James Russell Lowell, "may be made a round in the ever-lengthening ladder by which we climb to knowledge and to that temperance and serenity of mind which, as it is the ripest fruit of wisdom, is also the sweetest. But this can only be if we read such books as make us think." And "for my own part," in the same strain says one of the *Guessers at Truth*, "I have ever gained the most profit, and the most pleasure also, from the books which made me think the most." Which stands to reason. If the mind is made a mere siphon through which, or a mere flume over which, water flows, nothing is gained. Make the mind a mill, and power is developed, commodities are manufactured. But such mental machinery is not constructed in a week or a month. Locke devotes a section of his *'Conduct of the Understanding'* to the subject of reading, and in it makes some pregnant remarks pertinent to the futility of thoughtless perusal.

"Reading," he says, "furnishes the mind only with materials of knowledge; it is thinking makes what we read ours. . . . The mind is backward in itself to be at the pains to trace every argument to its original, and to see upon what basis it stands, and how firmly; but yet it is this that gives so much the advantage to one man more than another in reading. The mind should by severe rules be tyed down to this, at first, uneasy task; use and exercise will give it facility. . . . Those who have got this faculty, one may say, have got the true key of books, and the clue to lead them through the mizmaze of variety of opinions and authors to truth and certainty. . . . This way of thinking on, and profiting by, what we read, will be a clog and rub to any one only in the beginning: when custom and exercise has made it familiar, it will be dispatched, on most occasions, without resting or interruption in the

course of our reading. . . . Besides that, when the first difficulties are over, the delight and sensible advantage it brings, mightily encourages and enlivens the mind in reading."

Emerson's rules for reading should be known by all: "First, never read any book that is not a year old. Second, never any but famed books. Third, never any but what you like." Here again is a great man taking it for granted that what we like is sure to be not only famous but old,—rather an unwarrantable assumption in these days when most people like only the newest and the most infamous, and who would not dream of not having read, say, *'King Solomon's Mines'* when everybody else was reading *'The People of the Mist,'* or *'The Stickit Minister'* when everybody was devouring *'The Lilac Sun-Bonnet,'* or *'Peter Ibbetson'* when all the world was all agog on *'Trilby.'* Emerson very evidently lets such people alone. But his rules are sensible indeed. They will at all events rescue us from that most pernicious vice of trying to read too much,—a deadly habit, the ultimate outcome of which is an inability really to read anything at all. Better, perhaps, adapting Shelley (which may condone the language), be damned with Hobbes and Kant and Schopenhauer and Sir James Stephen than go to heaven with your polymath. "If I had read as much as other men," said Hobbes, "I should doubtless have shared their ignorance;" "Kant," said De Quincey, "never read a book, no book at all, none whatsoever;" "the safest way of having no thoughts of our own," said Schopenhauer, "is to take up a book every moment we have nothing to do;" "to aspire after the fashionable accomplishment of literary omniscience," said Sir James Stephen, "is a pretension

as extravagant as pernicious." Nevertheless there have been minds capable of aspiring to this bad eminence without degradation. Napoleon pored over the most recent novels in his travelling-carriage while moving from camp to camp. Byron avers that he had read some four thousand novels by the time he was nineteen. Macaulay seems to have devoured nearly everything that issued from the press of his time. Well, when we can win Austerlitzes and Jenas, or compose 'Childe Harolds,' or write Histories of England for twenty-thousand-pound cheques, we too may read light novels with a clear conscience.

It is hardly necessary to insist upon the absolute necessity of reading some books, or at least some portions of some books, absolutely accurately and minutely, weighing carefully every word and syllable and letter. This we all had to do in youth; happy are we if we had to do it thoroughly. Mr Ruskin puts tremendous stress upon this.

"When you come to a good book," he asserts, "you must ask yourself, 'Am I inclined to work as an Australian miner would? Are my pick-axes and shovels in good order, and am I in good trim myself, my sleeves well up to the elbow, and my breath good, and my temper?'"

And he goes on—

"You must get into the habit of looking intensely at words, and assuring yourself of their meaning, syllable by syllable—nay, letter by letter. . . . You might read all the books in the British Museum (if you could live long enough), and remain an utterly 'illiterate,' uneducated person; but . . . if you read ten pages of a good book, letter by letter,—that is to say, with real accuracy,—you are for evermore in some measure an educated person. The entire difference between education

and non-education (as regards the merely intellectual part of it) consists in this accuracy."

He is right here, fanciful as Mr Ruskin sometimes is. Even if Homer sometimes nods, to slur over the *literæ scriptæ* of a really great writer which *manent* is positive sin. The really great writer's every syllable is deserving of study. That would be a bold critic who undertook to improve the wording in the best passages of a Homer, a Virgil, a Milton, a Macaulay, a South, or even a Stevenson, peace to his manes.

And when we are in this manner reading a great book by a great man, let us not be afraid of using a dictionary. A dictionary? A dozen; at all events until Dr Murray's huge undertaking is finished. And even then; for no one dictionary will help us through some authors—say Chaucer, or Spenser, or Sir Thomas Browne. Let us use our Greek lexicon, and Latin dictionary, and French dictionary, and Anglo-Saxon dictionary, and etymological dictionary, and dictionaries of antiquity and biography and geography, and concordances—anything and everything that will throw light on the meanings and histories of words.

Neither need we discuss the importance of reading all round a good book, as it were, of gaining some estimate of the character and temper of its author, of understanding something of the age in which he lived and of his relation to that age. 'Latter-Day Pamphlets' would be largely an incomprehensible book if we knew nothing either of what some one has called that *annus mirabilis*, 1848, and of the years that preceded it, or of the moral and political idiosyncrasies of the Chelsea Sage. To read anything by Rousseau or Diderot or Voltaire with-

out referring it to its proper place in those quickly shifting scenes of the French revolutionary epoch, would be to miss its true place in literature. Rousseau's political and economical diatribes, Diderot's social and scientific propagandism, Voltaire's anti-clerical jests and gibes,—these lose their relative values and their interest if we miss the circumstances under which they were uttered. How much more interesting, too, becomes Milton's "Comus" if we remember the hubbub of dramatic criticism that preceded it: Prynne's furious 'Illostriomastix,' with its wholesale flagellation of plays, players, and playing, in which some thought that even the Queen was grossly libelled; the elaborate retort of the Inns of Court by the gorgeous masque acted before the royal family and Court; the Star Chamber trial; and Prynne's severe sentence. "The fitting answer to Prynne's railing," says Mr Gardiner, "was to embody pure thoughts and noble teaching in a dramatic form. No living Englishman was so capable of giving him such a refutation as the singer of the 'Alle-gro' and the 'Penseroso.'" The "fitting answer" was "Comus." To read "Comus" without any knowledge of this, its motive and origin, is to miss the very kernel of its purport. "The beautiful soul makes beautiful the outward form; the base act debases the soul of him who commits it. This was Milton's highest message to the world. This was the witness of Puritanism at its best."²

To speak of the reading of "Comus" is to recall the fact that the reading of poetry is, or should be, a very different thing

from the reading of prose. Prose, *qua* prose, conveys fact or propounds theory, though there is abundance of prose that does much more than this—Plato's, for example, and De Quincey's, and Carlyle's, and Mr Ruskin's—the full list would be a long one indeed; but poetry—what does not poetry do? It stirs the emotions and stimulates the imagination; it reveals to the inner and spiritual man the secret springs of beauty, and opens up a world of dreams more real than the world of reality; it conveys dim hints at once of the infinity and the divinity of mystery; it endows him who reads with a sort of sacred second-sight by which he "sees into the life of things"; it gives glimpses of God's universe such as it must have been when God Himself "saw everything that He had made, and behold it was very good." "What," asks Shelley, "were virtue, love, patriotism, friendship,—what were the scenery of this beautiful universe which we inhabit; what were our consolations on this side of the grave—and what were our aspirations beyond it, if poetry did not ascend to bring light and fire from those eternal regions where the owl-winged faculty of calculation dare not ever soar?" Whom has not poetry rescued from his "own spirit's hurtling harms"? Who has not been soothed by Wordsworth, stirred by Tennyson, carried into the empyrean on Shelley's plumes? The world, if we only knew it, is instinct with a beautiful and divine mystery; it is the artist alone who reveals it.

Poetry is a form of art, and to attempt in a paragraph to lay down rules for the reading of poetry would be as futile as to

¹ The Personal Government of Charles I., vol. ii. p. 42.

² *Op. cit.*, vol. ii. p. 44.

attempt as briefly to elucidate the pleasures and profits of music or painting, and how best they might be gained. Intelligently to read poetry one must be something of a poet, as certainly to enjoy music or painting one must have an ear or an eye for sound or colour. And this demands, first, a talent; second, study. "If you sit down to read poetry," says Mr Ruskin, "with merely the wish to be amused, without a willingness to take some pains to work out the secret meanings, without a desire to sympathise with, and yield to, the prevailing spirit of the writer, you had better keep to prose; for no poetry is worth reading which is not worth learning by heart."¹

It would be hugely interesting could we really know how some great readers really read. What many of them read we know, and the results of their reading we know; but exactly how they scanned the printed page few of them have told us. There is, however, one great man still living who, in numberless passages scattered through his many works, has given us an insight into the very manner and method he himself has read some books, and this is Mr John Ruskin. Every one will recall his searching analysis of those lines in Milton's "Lycidas," which he gave as samples of how to read, in his Lectures with the name of 'Sesame and Lilies,' commencing,

"Last came, and last did go,
The Pilot of the Galilean Lake;"

the immense meaning he sees in those three words, "creep," and "intrude," and "climb"; the remarkable exposition of that curious and catachrestical collocation "blind mouths"; the far-reaching

significance he detects in the line—

"But sworn with wind, and the rank
mist they draw."

There is one sample of Mr Ruskin's way of reading that, despite its length, is worth giving entire. It is his analysis of the language which Shakespeare puts into the mouth of Henry V. when addressing the ambassadors of France after their presentation to him of the tennis-balls from Louis, son of Charles V. Mr Ruskin is speaking of "style," and says—

"I can show you the main tests of style in the space of a couple of pages.

"I take two examples of absolutely perfect, and in manner highest, *i.e.*, kingly, and heroic, style: the first example in expression of anger, the second of love.

(1) "'We are glad the Dauphin is so pleasant with us,
His present, and your pains, we thank you for.
When we have match'd our rackets to these balls,
We will in France, by God's grace, play a set
Shall strike his father's crown into the hazard.'

(2) "'My gracious Silence, hail!
Wouldst thou have laughed, had I come coffin'd home
That weep'st to see me triumph! Ah, my dear,
Such eyes the widows in Corioli wear
And mothers that lack sons.'

"Let us note, point by point, the conditions of greatness common to both these passages, so opposite in temper.

"A. Absolute command over all passion, however intense; this the first-of-first conditions (see the king's own sentence just before,

"We are no tyrant, but a Christian king,
Unto whose grace our passion is as subject
As are our wretches fettered in our prisons");

and with this self-command, the

¹ Letters Addressed to a College Friend during the Years 1840-1845, pp. 88, 89.

supremely surveying grasp of every thought that is to be uttered, before its utterance; so that each may come in its exact place, time, and connection. The slightest hurry, the misplacing of a word, or the unnecessary accent on a syllable, would destroy the 'style' in an instant.

"*B.* Choice of the fewest and simplest words that can be found in the compass of the language, to express the thing meant: these few words being also arranged in the most straightforward and intelligible way; allowing inversion only when the subject can be made primary without obscurity: thus, 'his present, and your pains, we thank you for' is better than 'we thank you for his present and your pains,' because the Dauphin's gift is by courtesy put before the ambassador's pains; but 'when to these balls our rackets we have matched' would have spoiled the style in a moment, because—I was going to have said, ball and racket are of equal rank, and therefore only the natural order proper; but also here the natural order is the desired one, the English racket to have precedence of the French ball. In the fourth line the 'in France' comes first, as announcing the most important resolution of action; the 'by God's grace' next, as the only condition rendering resolution possible; the detail of issue follows with the strictest limit in the final word. The king does not say 'danger,' far less 'dishonour,' but 'hazard' only; of *that* he is, humanly speaking, sure.¹

"*C.* Perfectly emphatic and clear utterance of the chosen words; slowly in the degree of their importance, with omission however of every word not absolutely required; and natural use of the familiar contractions of final dissyllable. Thus, 'play a set shall strike' is better than 'play a set *that* shall strike,' and 'match'd' is kingly

short—no necessity could have excused 'matched' instead. On the contrary, the three first words, 'We are glad,' would have been spoken by the king more slowly and fully than any other syllables in the whole passage, first pronouncing the kingly 'we' at its proudest, and then the 'are' as a continuous state, and then the 'glad,' as the exact contrary of what the ambassadors expected him to be.

"*D.* Absolute spontaneity in doing all this, easily and necessarily as the heart beats. The king *cannot* speak otherwise than he does—nor the hero. The words not merely come to them, but are compelled to them. Even lisping numbers 'come,' but mighty numbers are ordained, and inspired.

"*E.* Melody in the words, changeable with their passion fitted to it exactly and the utmost of which the language is capable—the melody in prose being Eolian and variable—in verse, nobler by submitting itself to stricter law. I will enlarge upon this point presently.

"*F.* Utmost spiritual contents in the words; so that each carries not only its instant meaning, but a cloudy companionship of higher or darker meaning according to the passion—nearly always indicated by metaphor: 'play a set'—sometimes by abstraction—(thus in the second passage 'Silence' for silent one) sometimes by description instead of direct epithet ('coffin'd' for dead), but always indicative of there being more in the speaker's mind than he has said, or than he can say, full though his saying be. On the quantity of this attendant fulness depends the majesty of style; that is to say, virtually, on the quantity of contained thought in briefest words, such thought being primarily loving and true: and this the sum of all—that nothing can be well said, but with truth, nor beautifully, but by love."²

¹ I do not know whether it is possible that Mr Ruskin can have missed the point in the use of the technical term "hazard." It is evident from the words "rackets," "set," "strike," and "hazard," that Shakespeare is keeping the game of tennis strictly in mind, and is speaking tropically. To use "danger" or "dishonour" would have spoiled the metaphor; so that we need not go so far afield to explain their disuse.

² Nineteenth Century, vol. viii. pp. 401-403. September 1880.

Or as an example of an analysis of the purely technical elements of a prose passage, take the following from Robert Louis Stevenson. He is examining the alliteration in that well-known sentence of the 'Areopagitica':—

"I cannot praise a fugitive and cloistered virtue, unexercised and unbreathed, that never sallies out and sees her adversary, but slinks out of the race where that immortal garland is to be run for not without heat and dust."

And he says—

"Down to 'virtue,' the current S and R are both announced and repeated unobtrusively, and by way of a grace-note that almost inseparable group PVF is given entire. The next phrase is a period of repose almost ugly in itself, both S and R still audible, and B given as the last fulfilment of PVF. In the next four phrases, from 'that never' down to 'run for,' the mask is thrown off, and but for a slight repetition of the V and F, the whole matter turns, almost too obtrusively, on S and R; first S coming to the front, and then R. In the concluding phrase all these favourite letters, and even the flat A, a timid preference for which is just perceptible, are discarded at a blow and in a bundle; and to make the break more obvious, every word ends with a dental, and all but one with T, for which we have been cautiously prepared since the beginning. The singular dignity of the first clause, and this hammer-stroke of the last, go far to make the charm of this exquisite sentence. But it is fair to own that S and R are used a little coarsely."¹

Not many of us read thus. If we did, perhaps there would be fewer books to read, and those better worth the reading; for few authors, I take it, could stand a scrutiny of that sort. And yet,

in reality, every author ought to be able to stand such scrutiny; ought to write as if he expected to be subjected to such.

Coleridge, too, in his 'Lectures and Notes on Shakspeare,' has given us numerous examples of how he read; but these are to almost everybody so well known that I need not dilate on them here. Lest peradventure, however, there be even five among my readers to whom they are not known, the others will pardon one more long quotation, especially since it contains one of the best samples of how one great poet read another—and, as Thoreau asserts, it is only by a great poet that a great poet can be read. Coleridge is speaking of the opening lines of "Hamlet," and he says—

"Compare the easy language of common life, in which this drama commences, with the direful music and wild wayward rhythms and abrupt lyrics of the opening of 'Macbeth.' The tone is quite familiar;—there is no poetic description of night, no elaborate information conveyed by one speaker to another of what both had immediately before their senses (such as the first distich in Addison's 'Cato,' which is a translation into poetry of 'Past four o'clock and a dark morning!'); and yet nothing bordering on the comic on one hand, nor any striving of the intellect on the other. It is precisely the language of sensation among men who feared no charge of effeminacy, for feeling what they had no want of resolution to bear. Yet the armour, the dead silence, the watchfulness that first interrupts it, the welcome relief of the guard, the cold, the broken expressions of compelled attention to bodily feelings still under control—all excellently accord with, and prepare for, the after gradual rise into tragedy;—but, above all, into a tragedy, the interest of which is as

¹ *Contemporary Review*, vol. xlviii. p. 558. April 1885.

eminently *ad et apud intra*, as that of 'Macbeth' is directly *ad extra*.

"In all the best attested stories of ghosts and visions, as in that of Brutus, of Archbishop Cranmer, that of Benvenuto Cellini recorded by himself, and the vision of Galileo communicated by him to his favourite pupil Torricelli, the ghost-seers were in a state of cold or chilling damp from without, and of anxiety within. It has been with all of them as with Francisco on his guard,—alone, in the depth and silence of the night;—'twas bitter cold, and they were sick at heart, and *not a mouse stirring*.' The attention to minute sounds—naturally associated with the recollection of minute objects, and the more familiar and trifling, the more impressive from the unusualness of their producing any impression at all—gives a philosophic pertinency to this last image; but it has likewise its dramatic use and purpose. For its commonness in ordinary conversation tends to produce the sense of reality, and at once hides the poet, and yet approximates the reader or spectator to that state in which the highest poetry will appear, and in its component parts, though not in the whole composition, really is the language of nature. If I should not speak it, I feel that I should be thinking it;—the voice only is the poet's,—the words are my own. That Shakspeare meant to put an effect in the actor's power in the very first words—'Who's there?'—is evident from the impatience expressed by the startled Francisco in the words that follow—'Nay, answer me: stand and unfold yourself!' A brave man is never so peremptory as when he feels that he is afraid. Observe the gradual transition from the silence and the still recent habit of listening in Francisco's—'I think I hear them'—to the more cheerful call out, which a good actor would observe, in the—'Stand ho! Who is there?' Bernardo's inquiry after Horatio, and the repetition and in his own presence, indicate a respect or an eagerness that implies him as one of the persons

who are in the foreground; and the scepticism attributed to him—

'Horatio says 'tis but our fantasy;
And will not let belief take hold of
him'—

prepares us for Hamlet's after-eulogy on him as one whose blood and judgment were happily commingled. The actor should also be careful to distinguish the expectation and gladness of Bernardo's 'Welcome, Horatio!' from the mere courtesy of his 'Welcome, good Marcellus!'¹

But after all is said and done, the one and only secret of successful reading lies contained in one simple sentence, Make what you read your own. Not until what we read has become a part of our mental equipment, until it has been literally assimilated by the mind, made an integral and indivisible portion of our sum of knowledge and wisdom, is what we read of any practicable avail. But this assimilation can only be accomplished by constant and careful thought; the mind, like the muscles, grows only by exercise, and does more efficiently only that which it does often. I have in my mind's eye two old people, the best I ever knew, the best I ever hope to know. No one would perhaps actually call them "readers." They never see even the outside of a novel. I have indeed heard them quote 'Lothair,' and I think 'Pickwick'—which to me is evidence of the tremendous rage there must once have been for these two works of fiction. Once and again, too, a line from Shakespeare may fall from their lips. But, on the whole, they are not what the world calls "readers." Probably they could not distinguish the "Thanatopsis" from the "Thanatophidia"; if one mentioned 'Dodo' in their presence

¹ Lectures and Notes on Shakspeare and other English Poets. By Samuel Taylor Coleridge. Now first collected by T. Ashe, B.A., pp. 346-348.

their minds would in all likelihood revert to palæontological ornithology; if one spoke of 'The Heavenly Twins' they would correct him and politely ask if it was not 'The Hebrew Twins' that was meant, a recent work which, I believe, deals with Jacob and Esau. Yet these two dear old people read as few people read. They read chiefly but one book, and this is the Bible; but they have made that book their own as not even, I venture to say, has Mr Gladstone made Homer his own. I think I speak the simple truth when I say they rarely have need to consult a concordance. So extreme a degree of specialism is not suited, of course, to "the general." I merely cite this as an example of the efficacy of following the rule to make one's own that which one reads. And fortunately this rule is elastic, since it permits—nay, necessitates—a choice of what is at once within one's capacities and consonant with one's inclinations.

As to systematic reading, that topic may be left to those who read systematically to discuss, and doubtless those who so read will praise the practice highly. In one's teens, of course, it is necessary, especially if one is going up for examinations. But this is study, not reading. In one's twenties system seems to be largely a matter of temperament. In one's thirties perhaps it is either a habit, or impossible. Besides, it can so easily be overdone. I once heard of a man who began at page 1 of volume i. of the ninth edition of the 'Encyclopædia Britannica' with the intention of devouring so many pages daily. Whether he succeeded in digesting the whole twenty-five volumes I did not hear. Too much system is like too elaborate fishing-tackle: it is all very

well for the experienced angler, but it seems useless and an affectation in the amateur. First prove your skill and keenness, then elaborate your means at will.—But what, after all, is systematic reading? If, like Mr Saintsbury, we make a study of Elizabethan literature, or, like Mr Gosse, of that of the eighteenth century, of course we shall read systematically. But this, again, is research, not reading. I am glad to see dear Charles Lamb on my side in my antipathy to a rigidly methodical system. Bridget Elia, he tells us,

"was tumbled early, by accident or design, into a spacious closet of good old English reading, without much selection or prohibition, and browsed at will upon that fair and wholesome pasturage. Had I twenty girls," he goes on, "they should be brought up exactly in this fashion. I know not whether their chance in wedlock might not be diminished by it; but I can answer for it, that it makes (if the worst come to the worst) most incomparable old maids."

Mr Ruskin, too, curiously enough recommends precisely the same process.

"If she can have access to a good library of old and classical books," he says, "there need be no choosing at all. Keep the modern magazine and novel out of your girl's way; turn her loose into the old library every wet day, and let her alone. She will find what is good for her; you cannot. . . . Let her loose in the library, I say, as you do a fawn in a field. It knows the bad weeds twenty times better than you; and the good ones too, and will eat some bitter and prickly ones, good for it, which you had not the slightest thought *were* good."

However, for a certain sort and a certain amount of system there is this much to be said—namely, that it is an excellent antidote to that insinuating and enervating habit

of wholly desultory reading. "Wholly," because, as Lord Iddesleigh has shown us, there is a desultory reading which is very profitable and not one whit pernicious. "Desultory reading," says Lowell, "hebetates the brain," but he inserts as a qualification, "except as a conscious pass-time." The scholar or the student need fear no cerebral hebetude. Fancy limiting a Macaulay to a system! a Macaulay who read some half-dozen books of the 'Iliad' in a country walk and recited the 'Paradise Lost' during a journey! But for him who is neither scholar nor student perhaps some orderly reading is advisable. For him, to combine the two—to keep one set of books for the purpose of reading carefully and well, and another for his more leisure hours—this would seem a rational and a pleasant mode of perusal.

Then again, that assertion of Bacon remains for ever true, "Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested." But that man, in Dean Alcott's phrase, will "read wisely and well" who will know exactly in which category to place any particular book. No one perhaps would do more than taste the 'Arabian Nights' or Burton's 'Anatomy of Melancholy,' and no one would chew and digest 'A Tramp Abroad,' or 'A Yankee in King Arthur's Court'; Carlyle's 'French Revolution' probably most people swallow; but where shall we put 'The Lives, Heroic Deeds, and Sayings of Gargantua and Pantagruel,' or 'The Ring and the Book,' or even 'The Excursion'? Not few of us, I fear me much, put all these and many others into that fourth class mentioned by Bacon, books, namely, that "may be read by deputy."

Of books to be chewed and

digested there should be at least three readings: the first to get a general bird's-eye view of the author's field of thought and the method in which he traverses it; the second to survey carefully all the ground he covers, examining all the nooks and crannies omitted in the first survey; the third to fix in the memory, with the help of transcriptions and tabulated statements if necessary, all his details, and to criticise the conclusions at which he arrives.

To master a book, perhaps the best possible way is to write an essay in refutation of it. One may be bound few things will escape us then. The next best way may perhaps be to edit and annotate it for students, though, if some recent hebdomadal animadversions upon certain Oxford styles of annotation are well founded, this is questionable. The worst way, I should think, would be to review it for a newspaper.

Eschew commentators till you have first read your text; or, better still, be your own commentator. Notes and glossaries are for undergraduates going up for examination. When we have read "Hamlet," we can take up Furness. Different readings and emendations may reveal the skill of the author; but first admire the painting, then look for the marks of the brush. Too many commentators reduce the gem to carbon to prove it diamond. Luckily some gems there are so refractory that no literary assayer can reduce them to ash. Who ever saw an annotated edition of "Epipsychidion"? Let us hope no one ever will, though that of "Adonais" is parlous near to it!

But, after all, how many books there are which seem to scoff at us from their shelves when we

solemnly discuss the best methods of reading them. How are we to read the thoughts of Marcus Aurelius or Epictetus's manual, or Amiel's journal, or the maxims of Rochefoucauld, or Coleridge's 'Aids to Reflection,' or the great English essayists, or a dozen others? None of these is a book solely for the study or the hammock or the easy-chair or the pillow; and yet each of them may, according to the mood of the reader, be both profitably and delightfully read in any or all of these places.

But such books as these are not for everybody. The thoughtful book is not for the thoughtless mind. Is a Thomas Carlyle to wrestle five years at lonely Craigenputtock with the problems of life and being that 'Sartor Resartus' may be skimmed in five hours? 'Tis not every one can chew, nor every one that can digest, the tough tit-bits of Teufelsdröckh. "As of ments," says Petrarch, "so likewise of books, the use ought to be limited according to the quality of him that useth them." Books there are require a liberal education to know and love, and which to know and love are themselves, like Stella, a liberal education. To read a book upon a subject of the rudiments of which we are ignorant is simply impossible. To prove the impossibility, let any one unacquainted with anatomy try Professor Huxley on the 'Anatomy of the Vertebrates,' or one imperfectly read in metaphysics Hegel on the 'Phænomenology of the Spirit.'

However, to leave the cloudy region of airy generalisation and come down to the practical and useful little details of earth, two or three common-sensible rules as to how to read may help us. And first, I would say, Never read a

book without pencil in hand. If you dislike disfiguring the margins and fly-leaves of your own books, borrow a friend's; but by all means use a pencil, if only to jot down the pages to be re-read. Coleridge, as Charles Lamb tells us, annotated nearly every book that came into his hands, his annotations "in *matter* oftentimes, and almost in *quantity* not unfrequently, vying with the originals." Second, the careful transcription of striking, beautiful, or important passages is a tremendous aid to the memory: these will live for years, clear and vivid as day, when the book itself has become spectral and shadowy in the night of oblivion. A manuscript volume of such passages, well indexed, will become in time one of the most valuable books in one's library: it is the essence of many others distilled in one's own alembic, and will be treasured by the literary alchemist as the housewife treasures her own particular pounce or *pot-pourri*. Of this practice we have numerous high examples: Demosthenes, so it is said, copied out the History of Thucydides eight several times; Southey's Commonplace Book extends to six volumes. But many books there are deserve more than mere transcription. Archbishop Whately recommends "writing an analysis, table of contents, index, or notes." One man I know keeps a separate little note-book for each work he reads. Third, do not read merely for reading's sake, and thus be classified with those persons whom Mr Balfour calls "unfortunate," and who, he says, "apparently read a book principally with the object of getting to the end of it." Such reading, to adopt a favourite simile of Macaulay, bears about the same relation to intelligent and purposive reading as marking time does

to marching: both may need exercise; but one is progressive, the other stationary. As a corollary to this, too, it is well to remember that there are multitudes of books unworthy of careful and entire perusal which yet contain much important matter. For these take Mr Balfour's advice and learn the "accomplishments of skipping and skimming"; learn, in short, how to "eat the heart out of" such books. Fourth, suit the book to the mood of the mind. Why take up the *Essays* of Bacon when the mind is not fit for food stronger than the *Essays* of Elia? And if the mind is bright, active, and alert, why waste its energy over books that require no thought while those that do remain unread? Fifth, remember there are some books that cannot be read too much, others that cannot be read too little. But, above all, one of the best habits to form in order to read successfully and with profit is so to read as that, while the mind is grasping the meaning of the proposition then before the eyes, it is at the same time calling up, rapidly and diligently, as many as possible of the propositions, cognate, similar, or contradictory, which lie embedded in the memory, themselves the

results of past research and reading. I can perhaps best compare this process to that pursued by a geologist who, while travelling along a road, is not content with observing what is just at his feet, but forms mental images of the underlying strata with which this superficial soil is connected. And I do not think we shall go very far wrong in saying that he will be the most intelligent reader who is able to recall the greatest number of such underlying strata. One excellent little plan, too, I know of by which to master and impress upon the mind the matter of the printed page, and this is, when the chapter or the paragraph is finished, to close the book and try, in the simplest possible language, to convey its contents to a mind more ignorant than your own—if possible, to a child's. You will be astonished sometimes to find how very clear your own thought must be in order that you may convey it to another. Lastly, let us ever keep in mind Bacon's most admirable advice: "Read not to contradict and confute; nor to believe and take for granted; nor to find talk and discourse; but to weigh and consider."

ARNOLD HAULTAIN.

THE SGEUL OF BLACK MURDO.

"*Mas breug nam e is breug thugam e.*"¹—*Gaelic Proverb.*

I.

BLACK MURDO's wife was heavy, and 'twas the time the little brown nuts were pattering in Stronbuie wood. Stronbuie spreads out its greenness to the sun from the slope of Cladich. It is, in its season, full of the piping of birds and the hurry of wings, and the winds of it have the smell of a fat soil. The Diarmaids were the cunning folk to steal it; for if Stronshira is good, Stronbuie is better; and though the loops of Aora tangle themselves in the gardens of the Red Duke, Lochow has enchantment for the galley of a king. Fraoch Eilean, Innis Chonell, and Innis Chonain—they cluster on the bend of it like the gems on a brooch, Inishail of the Monks makes it holy, and Cruachan-ben, who lords it over Lorn, keeps the cold north wind from the shore. They may talk of Glenaora, but Stronbuie comes close, close to the heart!

For all that, 'twas on a time a poor enough place for a woman in yon plight; for the rest of the clan crowded down on Innistry-nich, all fighters and coarse men of the sword, and a skilly woman or a stretching-board was no nearer than a day's tramp over the hill and down Aora glen to the walls of Innaora. If one died on Cladich-side then—and 'twas a dying time, for the Athol dogs were for ever at the harrying—it was but a rough burying, with no corranach and no mort cloth; if a child came, it found but cold water

and a cold world, whatever hearts might be. But for seven years no child came for Black Murdo.

They say, in the Gaelic old-word, that a stolen bitch will never throw clean pups nor a home-sick woman giants. Murdo recked nothing of that when he went wooing in a time of truce to Croit-bhile, the honey-croft that makes a red patch on the edge of Creag Dubh. He brought Silis home to the dull place at Stronbuie, and she baked his bannocks and ploughed his bit of soil, but her heart never left salt Finne-side. In the morning she would go to the hill to look through the blurred glen, and she would have made bargains with the ugliest crow that could flap on feathers for a day's use of his wings. She could have walked it right often and gaily to her people's place, but Black Murdo was of Olan Artair, and Artairich had not yet come under Diarmaid, and bloody knives made a march-dyke between the two tartans.

Seven years and seven days went by, and Black Murdo, coming in on an evening after a hard day at the hill, found Silis making the curious wee clothes. He looked at her keen, questioning, and she bleached to the lips.

"So!" said he.

"Just so," said she, breaking a thread with her teeth, and bending till the pent-flame dyed her neck like wine.

"God, and I'm the stout fel-

¹ If 'tis a lie to thee, 'twas a lie to me.

low!" said he, and out he went, down all the way to Portinsherrick, and lusty he was with the ale among the pretty men there.

Weeks chased each other like sheep in a fank, and Silis grew sick at the heart. There's a time for a woman when the word of a woman is sweeter than a harp; but there were only foolish girls at Innistrynich, and coarse men of the sword. So Murdo stayed in from the roes when the time crept close. To see him do the heavy work of the house and carrying in the peats was a sorry sight.

Silis kept dreaming of Finneside, where she had heard the long wave in the spring of the year when she had gone home on a password to a woman's wedding with Long Coll. The same Long Coll had brothers, and one had put a man's foolish sayings in her ears before ever she met Murdo, she a thin girl like a saugh-wand and not eighteen till Beltane. They called him—no matter—and he had the way with the women. Faith, it's the strange art! It is not looks, nor dancing, nor the good heart, nor wit, but some soft fire of the eye and maybe a song to the bargain. Whatever it was, it had Silis, for all that her good-man Murdo had a man's qualities and honesty extra.

They say, "*Cuic is sluic is Alpeinich, ach cuin a thàinig Artharaich?*"¹ in the by-word; but Artharaich had age enough for a *taibhsear* whatever, for Black Murdo had the Sight. It's the curious thing to say of a man with all his parts that he should be *taibhsear* and see visions: for a *taibhsear*, by all the laws, should be an old fellow with little use

for swords or shinny-sticks. But Murdo missed being a full *taibhsear* by an ell, so the fit had him seldom. He was the seventh son of a mother who died with the brand of a cross on her brow, and she was kin to the Glenurchy Woman. And something crept over him with the days, that put a mist in his eyes when he looked at Silis; but "I'm no real *taibhsear*," he said to himself, "and I swear by the black stones it is no cloth. A man with all the Gift might call it a shroud high on her breast, but——"

"Silis, a *bhean*, shall it be the Skilly Dame of Inneraora?"

A light leaped to the woman's eyes, for the very thing was in her mind.

"If it could be," she said, slowly; "but it's not easy to get her, for black's your name on Aora-side."

"Black or white, Murdo stands in his own shoes. He has been at the gate of Inneraora when Strong Colin the warder had little thought of it."

"Then, oh heart! it must be soon—to-morrow—but——"

The mouth of day found Silis worse, and Murdo on his way to Inneraora.

He stepped it down Glenaora like Coll Mor in the story, or the man with the fairy shoes. A cloud was over Tullich and a wet wind whistled on Kennachregan. The man's target played dunt on his back, so hasty was he, for all that the outposts of Big Colin had hawk's eyes on the pass. He had got the length of Alt Shelechan when a Diarmaid came out on him from the bracken with a curse on his mouth. He was a big Diarmaid, high-breasted and stark, for

¹ The hills and hollows and Clan Alpine came together, but when arose Clan Artair?

there's no denying there was breed in the pigs.

"Ho, ho, lad!" said he, crouselly, "it's risking it you are this day!"

Black Murdo's hands went to his sides, where a ready man's should ready be; but he had sight of Silis. He could see her in Stronbuie in the bothy, on the wee creepy-stool beside the peats, and he knew she was saying the Wise Woman's Wish that Diarmaid mothers have so often need of. Length is length, and it's a far cry to Lochow sure enough; but even half a *taibhsear* takes no count of miles and time.

He spoke softly. "I go to Inneraora for the Skilly Woman. My wife is a daughter of your folks, and she'll have none but the dame who brought herself home."

"Death or life?" asked the Diarmaid, a freckled hand still on the basket-hilt. He put the question roughly, for nobody likes to lose a ploy.

"Life it is, my lad. It's not to dress corpses, but to wash weans she's wanted."

"Ho-chutt!" went the blade back against the brass of the scabbard (for he was *duine-uasail* who carried it), and the man's face changed.

"Pass!" he said. "I would not stand in a bairn's way to life. Had it been shrouds instead of sweelers, we could have had it out, for a corpse is in no great hurry. But troth it's yourself is the tight one, and I would have liked a bit of the old game."

"No more than Murdo, red fellow!"

"Murdo! So be't; yet Murdo will give me his dirk for gate-pay, or they'll be saying further down that Calum, as good a man, kept out of his way."

The *biodag* went flying into the

grass at Calum's feet, and Murdo went leaping down the glen. It was like stalking deer for the Diarmaids. Here and there he had to go into the river or among the hazel-switches, or crawl on his stomach among the gall. From Kilmune to Uchdan-barracaldine the red fellows were passing, or playing with the shinty or the *cabar*, or watching their women toiling in the little fields.

"Thorns in their sides!" he said to himself, furious, when another keen-eyed Diarmaid caught sight of his tartan and his black beard among some whins. It was a stripling with only a dirk, but he could gather fifty men on the crook of his finger.

"Stand!" cried the Diarmaid, flashing the dirk out. "What want ye so far over this way?"

Murdo, even in the rage, saw Silis, a limp creature, sweating in her pains, her black eyes (like the sloe) keen on the door. So close, so sure, so sorrowful! He could have touched her on the shoulder and whispered in her ear.

"I am Black Murdo," he told the lad. "I am for Inneraora for the Skilly Woman for my wife, child of your own clan."

"Death or life?"

"Life."

"Tis a bonny targe ye have, man; it might be doing for toll."

The lad got it, and Murdo went on his way. He found the Skilly Woman, who put before him sour milk and brose. But he would not have drink or sup, so back through the Diarmaids they went without question (for the woman's trade was as good as the chief's convoy), till they came to Tom-andearc. Out upon them there a fellow red and pretty.

"Hold!" he said, as if it had been dogs. "What's the name of ye, black fellow?"

Murdo cursed in his beard. "My name's honest man, but I have not time to prove it."

"Troth that's a pity. But seeing there's the woman with you, you must e'en go your way. There's aye some of you folk on the stretching-board. Ye want heart, and ye die with a flaff of wind. Lend me your sword, 'ille!'"

"Squint-mouth!" cried Murdo, "your greedy clan took too much off me this day already for me to part with the sweetest blade Gow-an-aora ever beat on iron. I took it from one of your cowards at Carnus, and if it's back it goes, it's not with my will."

"Then it's the better man must have it," said the red fellow, and, lord, he was the neat-built one!

They took off their coats, and for lack of bucklers rolled them round their arms, both calm and canny. The Diarmaid was first ready with his brand out, and Murdo put to his point. For a little the two men stood, spread out, hard-drawn behind the knees, with the cords of the neck like thongs, then at it with a clatter of steel.

The Skilly Woman, with the plaid pulled tight over her grey hair, sat with sunk eyes on a stone and waited without wonder. She had sons who had died in brawls at Kilmichael market, or in the long foray far in Kintail; and her man, foster-brother to a chief, got death in the strange foreign wars, where the pay was not hide and horn but round gold.

A smoky soft smirr of rain filled all the gap between the hills, though Sithean Sluaidhe and Dunchuach had tips of brass from a sun dropping behind the scaurs and bens. The grass and the gall lost their glitter and became grey and dull; the hill of Lecknamban, where five burns are born, coaxed

the mist down on its breast like a lover. It was wet, wet, but never a drop made a rush bend or a leaf fall. Below the foot the ground was greasy, as it is in a fold at the dipping-time; but the two men pulled themselves up with a leap on it as if it might be dry sand, and the brogues made no error on the soil.

First the Diarmaid pressed, for he had it over the other man in youth, and youth is but tame when it's slow or slack. Murdo waited, all eyes that never blinked, with the basket well up, and kept on his toes. "Splank, sp-ll-ank, sp-ll-ank—*siod e!*" said the blades, and the Diarmaid's for a time made the most of the music, but he never got inside the black fellow's guard. Then Murdo took up the story with a snap of the teeth, skelping hard at the red one till the hands dirled in the basket like a bag of pins. The smirr gathered thicker, and went to rain that fell solid, the brogues grew like steeped bladders on the feet, a scatter of crows made a noisy homing to the trees at Tullich, and Aora gobbled like swine in a baron's trough.

"Haste ye, heroes!" said the old woman, cowering on the wet stone; "haste ye, dears; it's mighty long ye are about it."

The Diarmaid turned the edge twice on the coated arm, and Murdo wasted his wind to curse. Then he gave the stroke that's worth fifty head of kyloes (fine they know that same all below Oladich!), and a red seam jumped to the Diarmaid's face. All his heart went to stiffen his slacking heavy arm, and he poured on Murdo till Murdo felt it like a rain of spears. One hot wandering stroke he got on the bonnet, and for want of the bowl of brose at Inneraora, the wind that should go to help him went inside, and

turned his stomach. Sweat, hot and salt, stung his eyes; his ears filled with a great booming, he fell in a weary dream of a far-off fight on a witched shore, with the waves rolling, and some one else at the fencing, and caring nought, but holding guard with the best blade Gow-an-aora ever took from flame. Back stepped the Diarmaid, sudden, and sweep went his steel at the shaking knees.

A bairn's cry struck Murdo's ear through the booming and sent him full awake. He drew back the stretched foot fast, and round the red one's sword hissed through air. "Foil! foil!" said Murdo, and he slashed him on the groin.

"That'll do, man; no more," said the Skilly Woman, quickly.

"I may as well finish him; it's lame he'll be all his days any way, and little use is a man with a halt in a healthy clan."

"Halt or no halt, let him be; he's my second cousin's son."

Murdo looked for a bit at the bloody thing before him, but the woman craved again, with bony fingers on his wrist; so he spat on the dirty green tartan and went. The smoke rose from him and hung about with a smell of wearied flesh, the grey of the mist was black at Carnus. When the pair came over against Lochow, where one can see the holy isle when it is day, the night was deep and cold; but the woman bent at the cross with a "*Mhoire Mhathair*," and so did the man, picking the clotted blood from his ear. They dropped down the brae on the house at last.

For a little Black Murdo's finger hung on the sneck, and when he heard a sound he pushed in the door.

All about the house the peat reek swung like mist on the mountain. Wind and rain fought it

out on Cladich brae, and when it was not the wind that came bold through the smoke-hole in the roof, 'twas the rain, a beady slant that hissed on the peats like roasting herrings. The woman lay slack on the bed, her eyes glazed over with the glass that folks see the great sights through, and her fingers making love over the face and breast of a new-born boy that cried thinly at her knees. A lighted crusie spluttered with heavy smell at the end of a string on a rafter.

"O Skilly Woman, Skilly Woman, it's late we are!" said Black Murdo.

"Late enough, as ye say, just man. Had ye bartered an old sword for twenty minutes on the Tom-an-deare, I was here before danger!"

Then the Skilly Woman set him on the wet windy side of the door, and went about with busy hands.

The man, with the ragged edge of his kilt scraping his knees and the rain bubbling in his brogues, leaned against the wattled door and smeared the blood from his brow. A cold wind gulped down from Glenurchy, and ghosts were over Inishail. The blast whirled about and whirled about and swung the rowan like a fern, and whistled in the gill, and tore the thatch, all to drown a child's cry. The blackness crowded close round like a wall, and flapped above like a plaid—Stronbuie was in a tent and out of the world. Murdo strained to hear a voice, but the wind had the better of him. He went round to the gable, thinking to listen at the window, but the board on the inside shut the wind and him out. The strange emptiness of grief was in his belly.

Inside the Skilly One went like a witch, beak-nosed and half-blind.

There was clatter of pans and the dash of water, the greeting of the child and the moan of the mother. What else is no man's business. For all she was skilly the old dame had no thought of the woman sinking.

"You'll have blithe-meat in the morning," she said, cheerily, from the fireside.

Silis made worse moan than before.

"Such a boy, white love! And hair like the copper! His hide is mottled like a trout's back; calf of my heart!"

Silis, on her side, put out white craving arms. "Give it to me, wife; give it to me."

"Wheeah! rest ye, dear, rest ye," said the Skilly Dame.

But she put the bairn in its mother's arms. Silis, when she had it on her breast, sobbed till the bed shook.

"Is not he the hero, darling?" said the Skilly Woman. "It's easy seen he's off Clan Diarmaid on one side, for all that your hair is black as the sloe. Look at the colour of him!"

Fright was in the mother's face. "Come close, come close till I tell you," she said, her long hair damp on her milky shoulders.

The Skilly Woman put down her head and listened with wonder.

"Me-the-day! Was I not the

blind one to miss it? His name, white love. No one shall ken it from me, not even Murdo."

A man's name took up the last breath of Silis; she gave a little shiver, and choked with a sound that the old crone had heard too often not to know.

She looked, helpless, for a little at the bed, then felt the mother's feet. They were as cold as stone.

A cry caught Murdo's ear against the wattles, and he drove in the door with his shoulder, heeding no sneek nor bar.

"Am not I the blind fool?" said the crone. "There's your wife, gone, cheap enough at the price of a yard of steel."

They stood and looked at the bed together, the bairn crying without notice.

"I knew it," said the man, heaving; "*taibhshear* half or whole, I could see the shroud on her neck."

The grey light was drifting in from Cladich. The fir-trees put stretched fingers up against the day. Murdo placed a platter of salt on a bosom as cold and as white as the snow.

"You're feeding him on the wrong cloth," said he, seeing the crone give suck to the child from a rag of Diarmaid tartan dipped in goat's milk.

II.

The boy grew like a tree in a dream, that is seed, sapling, and giant in one turn on the side. Stronbuie's wattled bothy, old and ugly, quivered with his laughing, and the young heather crept closer round the door. The Spotted Death filled Inishail with the well-fed and the warm-happed; but the little one, wild on the brae, forgotten, sucking the whey

from rags and robbing the bush of its berries, gathered sap and sinew like the child of kings. It is the shrewd way of God! There was bloody enough work forby, for never a sheiling passed but the brosey folks came pouring down Glenstrae, scythe, sword, and spear, and went back with the cattle before them, and redness and smoke behind. But no raider

put hand on Black Murdo, for now he was *taibhsear* indeed, and the *taibhsear* has magic against club or steel. How he became *taibhsear* who can be telling? When he buried Silis out on the isle, his heart grew heavy, gloom seized him, the cut of the Diarmaid's sword gave a quirk to his brain that spoiled him for the world's use. He took to the hills no more in sport, he carried Gow-an-aora's sword no more in battle, for all that it cost him so dear. A poor man's rig was his at the harvest because of his Gift, and the calzie-cock or the salmon never refused his lure.

Skill of the claymore, the seven cuts, and yon ready slash worth fifty head of kyloes he gave to the boy, and then the quick cunning parry, and the use of the foot and knee that makes half a swordsmen.

But never a spot of crimson would he have on Rory's steel.

"First dip in the blood of the man with the halt, and then fare-well to ye," he said, wearying for the day when the boy should avenge his mother.

Folks — far - wandered ones — brought him news of the man with the halt that was his giving, the Diarmaid whose bargain for a sword on Tom-an-dearc cost Silis her life. He passed it on to the boy, and he filled him with old men's tales. He weaved the cunning stories of the pigs of Inner-aora, for all that the boy's mother came from their loins, and he made them—what there may well be doubts of—cowards and weak.

"They killed your mother, Rory, her with the eyes like the sloe and the neck like snow; swear by the Holy Iron that the man with the halt we ken of gets his pay for it."

Rory swore on the iron. It is an easy thing for youth when the blood is strong and the *biodag* still

untried. He lay awake at night, thinking of his mother's murderer till the sweat poured. He would have been on the track of him before ever he had won his man's bonnet by lifting the *clach-cuid-fear*, but Murdo said, "Let us be sure. You are young yet, and I have one other trick of fencing worth while biding for."

At last, upon a time, Murdo found the boy could match himself, and he said, "Now let us to this affair."

He took the boy, as it might be, by the hand, and they ran up the hills and down the hills and through the wet glens to wherever a Diarmaid might be, and where were they not where strokes were going? The hoodie-crow was no surer on the scent of war. Blar-na-leine took them over the six valleys and the six mountains, Cowal saw them on the day the Lamonts got their bellyful, a knock came on them on the night when the Stewarts took their best from Appin and flung themselves on Inner-aora, and they went out without a word and marched with that high race.

But luck was with the man with the halt they sought for. At muster for raid, or at market, he was there, swank man and pretty but for the lameness he had found on an ill day on Tom-an-dearc. He sang songs round the ale with the sweetness of the bird, and his stories came ready enough off the tongue. Black Murdo and the boy were often close enough on his heel, but he was off and away like the corp-candle before they were any nigher. If he had magic, it could have happened no stranger.

Once, a caird who went round the world with the jingle of cans on his back and a sheaf of withies in his oxters, told them that a lame Diarmaid was bragging at Kil-

michael fair that he would play single-stick for three days against the country-side. They sped down to Ford, and over the way; but nothing came of it, for the second day had found no one to come to the challenge, and the man with the halt was home again.

Black Murdo grew sick of the chase, and the cub too tired of it. For his father's fancy he was losing the good times—many a fine exploit among the Atholmen and the brosey folks of Glenstrae; and when he went down to Innistrynich to see the lads go out with belt and plaid, he would give gold to be with them.

One day, "I have dreamed a dream," said Murdo. "Our time is come; what we want will be on the edge of the sea, and it will be the third man after dawn. Come, son, let us make for Inneraora."

Inneraora lies now between the bays, sleeping day and night, for the old times are forgot and the nettle's on Dunchuach. Before the plaid of Mac Caillein Mor was spread from Cowal to Cruachan, it was the stirring place, high and dry on the bank of Slochd-a-chubair, and the dogs themselves fed on buck-flesh from the mountains, so rowth the times! One we ken of has a right to this place or that place yonder that shall not be named, and should hold his head as high on Aora as any chief of the boar's snout; but *no thruaigh!* *no thruaigh!* the Black Bed of Macartair is in the Castle itself, and Macartair is without soil or shield. How Diarmaid got the old place is a sennachie's tale. "As much of the land as a heifer's hide will cover," said the foolish writing, and Mac Caillein had the guile to make the place his own. He cut the hide of a long-backed heifer into thin thongs, and stretched it

round Stronbuie. There is day about to be seen with his race for that!

Over to Inneraora then went Murdo, and Rory clad for fighting, bearing with him the keen old sword. 'Twas a different time going down the glen then from what it was on the misty day Murdo fetched the Skilly Dame; for the Diarmaids he met by the way said, "Tis the Lochow *taibhs*ear and his tail," and let them by without a word, or maybe with a salute. They went to the Skilly Dame's house, and she gave them the Gael's welcome, with bannocks and crowdie, pudding and ale. But she asked them not their business, for that is the way of the churl. She made them soft scented beds of white hay in a dirty black corner, where they slept till cock-crow with sweet weariness in their bones.

The morning was a grey day with frost and snow. Jumping John's bay below the house was asleep with a soft smoke like a blanket over it. Lean deer from behind the wood came down trotting along the shore, sniffing the saltness, and wondering where the meat was. With luck and a good sgian-dubh a quick lad could do some gralloching. The tide was far out from Ard Rannoch to the Gallows-tree, and first there was the brown wrack and then there was the dun sand, and on the edge of the sand a bird went stalking. The old man and the young one stood at the gable and looked at it all.

It was a short cut from below the castle to the point of Ard Rannoch, if the tide was out, to go over the sand. "What we wait on," said Murdo, softly, "goes across there. There will be two men, and them ye shall not heed, but the third is him ye ken of.

Ye'll trap him between the whin-bush and the sea, and there can be no escaping unless he takes to the swimming for it."

Rory plucked his belts tight, took out the good blade wondrous quiet, breathing fast and heavy. The rich blood raced up his back, and tingled hot against his ruddy neck.

"What seest thou, my son?" said Murdo at last.

"A man with a quick step and no limp," quoth the lad.

"Let him pass."

Then again said the old man, "What seest thou?"

"A *bodach* frail and bent, with a net on his shoulder," said Rory.

"Let him pass."

The sun went high over Ben Ime, and struck the snow till the eyes were blinded. Rory rubbed the sweat from his drenched hand on the pleat of his kilt, and caught the basket-hand tighter. Over Aora mouth reek went up from a fishing-skiff, and a black spot stood out against the snow.

"What seest thou now, lad?" asked Murdo.

"The man with the halt," answered the lad.

"Then your time has come, child. The stroke worth the fifty head, and pith on your arm!"

Rory left the old man's side, and went down through a patch of shelisters, his mouth dry as a peat and his heart leaping. He was across the wreck and below the pools before the coming man had noticed him. But the coming man thought nothing wrong, and if he did, it was but one man at any rate, and one man could use but one sword, if swords were going. Rory stepped on the edge of the sand, and tugged the bonnet down on his brow, while the man limped on between him and the

sea. Then he stepped out briskly and said, "Stop, pig!" He said it strangely soft, and with, as it were, no heart in the business; for though the lame man was strong, deep-breasted, supple, and all sound above the belt, there was a look about him that made the young fellow have little keenness for the work.

"Pig?" said the Diarmaid, putting back his shoulders and looking under his heavy brows. "You are the Lochow lad who has been seeking for me?"

"Ho, ho! red fellow; ye kent of it, then?"

"Red fellow! It's red enough you are yourself, I'm thinking. I have no great heed to draw steel on a lad of your colour, so I'll just go my way." And the man looked with queer wistful eyes over his shoulder at the lad, who, with blade-point on the sand, would have let him pass.

But up by at the house the *taibhsear* watched the meeting. The quiet turn it took was beyond his reading; for he had thought it would be but the rush, and the fast fall-to, and no waste of time, for the tide was coming in.

"White love, give him it!" he cried out, making for the shore. "He looks lame, but the pig's worth a man's first fencing."

Up went the boy's steel against the grey cloud, and he was at the throat of the Diarmaid like a beast. "Malison on your black heart, murderer!" he roared, still gripping his broadsword. The Diarmaid flung him off like a child, and put up his guard against the whisking of his blade.

"Oh, foolish boy!" he panted wofully as the lad pressed, and the grey light spread over sea and over shore. The quiet tide crawled in about their feet; birds

wheeled on white feathers, with mocking screams; the old man leaned on his staff and cheered the lad. The Diarmaid had all the coolness and more of art, and he could have ended the play as he wanted. But he only fended, and at last the slash worth fifty head found his neck. He fell on his side, with a little twisted laugh on his face, saying, "Little hero, ye fence—ye fence——"

"Haste ye, son! finish the thing!" said the *taibhsear*, all shaking, and the lad did as he was told, bocking at the spurt the blood made. He was pushing his dirk in the sand to clean it, when his eye fell on the Skilly Woman hirpling nimbly down to the shore. She was making a loud cry.

"God! God! it's the great pity about this," said she, looking at

Murdo cutting the silver buttons off the corpse's jacket. "Ken ye the man that's there dripping?"

"The man's no more," said Rory, cool enough. "He has gone travelling, and we forgot to ask his name."

"Then if happy you would be, go home to Lochow, and ask it not, nor ought about him if you wouldn't rue long. You sucked your first from a Diarmaid rag, and it was not for nothing."

Murdo drew back with a clumsy start from the dead man's side and looked down on his face, then at the boy's, queerly. "I am for off," said he at last with a sudden hurry. "You can follow if you like, red young one." And he tossed the dead man's buttons in Rory's face!

NEIL MUNRO.

AUTOMATIC STREET TRACTION.

THE last few months have witnessed a marked advance in the supercession of horses for tramway purposes, and even for the propulsion of ordinary carriages. We have not had the *voiture automobile* at large in Great Britain, if we except the Hon. Evelyn Ellis's experimental journey from Datchet to West Malvern. The chief reason is perhaps that our existing laws regulating the speed of power-propelled vehicles along our public roads have prevented any proper tests of their capacity, and their usefulness generally, from being made here; and few of us have been so keen as to care for a journey to Paris in order to satisfy ourselves on an abstract matter incapable just now of being carried out in the concrete and to the full. The question of repealing or modifying the Locomotive Act, 1865, so as to permit of petroleum and electric motors being more extensively used, was introduced into the last session of Parliament by Mr Cumming Macdona, in the shape of a question addressed to Mr Chaplin, who in reply promised to give the subject his careful consideration in connection with Mr Shaw Lefevre's bill. Pending any alteration in the law, nothing really practicable is to be done with petroleum carriages in our streets. But an exhibition of petroleum and other varieties of automatic conveyances was held at Tunbridge Wells on October 15; and in the light of this exhibition and of the achievements of our neighbours across the Channel, it may be opportune to discuss briefly the merits and drawbacks of automotors.

Experiments with petroleum and other motors as substitutes for horses in carriages have been going on in France for some years past. After not a few failures, the builders of these motors have succeeded in turning out an article with (so they tell us) a minimum of disadvantages and a maximum of advantages. Chief among the latter—the comparison being made with horses—are economy of working and more complete efficiency of control. There is no doubt of the speed possibilities of electric and petroleum motors. The race from Paris to Bordeaux in June last settled this question finally, and at the same time demonstrated the superiority of the best class of petroleum motors over either the best existing steam-gas, or electric carriages. In that race sixty-six horseless vehicles took part, and the carriage which made the best run was a two-seated vehicle with petroleum motor. It traversed the distance of 727 miles in two days and fifty-three minutes, which is equal to 14.9 miles per hour. On the return journey there was an enforced stoppage, owing to an accident, of over an hour. Apart from this, the average speed obtained was over fifteen miles an hour. The other petroleum-driven carriages made excellent time—better than anything accomplished by either the gas, steam, or electric motors. We do not want a speed of fifteen miles an hour on English roads for ordinary traffic purposes; but this feat of the Daimler motor shows what it can do on occasion, and when it is put upon its mettle, so to speak. A vehicle that will carry two men and its

own motive-power 727 miles in two days, up and down hills and over only fair roads, must obviously possess staying power, and be something more than a mere toy. And what about cost of working? While the cost of the Daimler motor varies with the good or bad nature of the road, the average expense is estimated at 4 centimes per kilometre for a two-seated carriage, and 5 centimes per kilometre for a four-seated one. This is equal to a fraction more than a halfpenny per mile. The Hon. Evelyn Ellis, who owns the first Daimler dog-cart seen at work in this country, says, in a letter to the 'Times,' that "the cost of running from Datchet to West Malvern, a distance of 120 miles, was within ten shillings, including lubricating oils, grease, &c." This is less than a penny per mile, and Mr Ellis adds that "this cost would have been much less if it had not been for the number of towns passed through, necessitating a slow speed, which consumes an equal amount of oil as if travelling fifteen miles an hour. The Gloucester journey, including passing through the town, making thirty miles in all, cost 1s. 6d."—that is, less than two-thirds of a penny per mile. The cost of a horse is at least twopence per mile; and on this basis the advantage works out in favour of the mechanical motor by more than two to one. The initial cost of a *voiture mécanique avec moteur à pétrole système Daimler*, to quote the rather cumbersome French phrase, varies from 4200 francs for one à deux places, to 6000 francs for a four-seated omnibus or a four-seated carriage *forme milord avec pavillon*; and if it be objected that this is greater than the first outlay on a four-wheeler or a

hansom with a single horse, it is considerably under what would be paid by a private owner for a carriage with one horse—to say nothing of two horses—and the saving is so great that the extra cost would very soon be equalised, even by the car proprietor. The most serious objection offered to the petroleum carriage is that the working of the machinery causes some vibration; but this has been greatly reduced, and it is claimed for the Daimler type that it has no perceptible vibration or noise. Another objection has been taken to the conventional style of the carriage itself; but probably the ideal carriage will come in its own good time. Place against these drawbacks the acknowledged advantages of the new conveyance—its cheapness, its superior cleanliness, its staying power, its ability to go either backwards or forwards, and its capacity for easy control—and the petroleum motor must represent a very distinct advance on horse traction.

If petroleum motors have in them the essentials of excellence for carriage purposes, it follows, almost as a matter of course, that their application to tramways will be attempted. If the conditions are different at all, this very difference lends additional force to the argument for their adoption—assuming that the requisite power be possible. But we do not propose to discuss here the question of petroleum motors as applied to tramways, because they are, as yet, only in the experimental stage. The present tendency is towards the adoption of electricity or cable traction for tramways. Steam has had its day. It is costly, dirty, and noisy. Its operation for city work is attended with objectionable features which have deterred many towns from

availing themselves of it; and though it has, up to a certain point, been commercially successful, its notorious drawbacks leave it a long way in the rear of the ideal. The effect on the rigid permanent way constitutes a serious item in the annual cost; it does not pay to keep up a frequent service except with the cars full; and the carrying out of the Board of Trade regulations as to the maintenance of speed and the consumption of exhaust steam cannot, on any locomotive hitherto designed, be guaranteed. Compressed-air motors have frequently been tried, the air being compressed at the central station and charged into tanks on the car, from which it is worked expansively into cylinders, in much the same way as steam. It will be remembered that an experiment was made with this force in London, where it failed signally, because of the heavy cost, the damaging effect on the permanent way, and the time lost in recharging. It must, however, be acknowledged that in France compressed air has been tried with not unfavourable results. But after all there is something fundamentally wrong about a principle under which the power is always being gradually reduced, and an illustration of this is found in the fact that the motor seen on the Caledonian Road more than once gave out while ascending the hill to the charging station at the top. Gas motors of several types have been exploited and tested, and London has at least one firm prepared to supply street cars impelled by gas. This company has made experiments at Croydon with results which are claimed to be very

gratifying. The gas-motor car which is now foremost in Germany, and which seems to have the brightest future, is the invention of a Dresden engineer named Lührrig. Two lines are in operation with this motor, which has been considerably improved since the death of the inventor—one of three miles at Dessau, opened in November 1894; and another of several miles, from Dresden to one of the suburban villages. Outwardly the appearance of the car is similar to that of an ordinary tramcar, save that the body is raised a trifle higher. The United States Consul-General at Frankfort-on-the-Main, who has sent several lengthy descriptions of the Lührrig tramway to the Department of State at Washington, says, "There is no smell of gas, no noticeable heat from the engine, and no undue noise or jar when the car is stopped or set in motion." Mr Mason adds, from his own experience of its working, that "the car is perfectly manageable, stops from full speed within its own length, starts without noise or shock, is free from heat or smell, runs as smoothly as a horse-car on what would be considered in England and America rather rough and poorly constructed track, far surpasses a horse-car in speed when the way is clear, and is handled safely and easily on a boulevard which, at certain hours, is crowded with traffic that renders frequent and sudden stops necessary." With gas at 4s. 2½d. per 1000 cubic feet, as at Dresden, the working expenses have been estimated at 3d. per car mile.¹ Another gas system in operation in Germany is that of MM. Guilliéron and Amrein, which is used on the line

¹ The objection to gas motors seems to be that they are wanting in reserve of power, and are therefore not well adapted for heavy traffic.

between Neuchâtel and St Blaize. The consumption of gas by this type of engine is a trifle less than that by the Lübrig car—34 cubic feet as against 34·7 cubic feet.

Electricity is generally applied to the service of street cars in three ways: (1) by accumulators; (2) by conduits; and (3) by overhead wires. The first is a self-contained system, and is free from the objections raised against the overhead system; but the heavy cost of working is an insuperable obstacle to its extension. The initial cost is relatively small, because no alteration of the lines is needed; and if the working charge were as low as in the case of either of the two other leading principles, tramway authorities now employing horses would not be slow to give the accumulator cars a trial for this very reason: but the current is obtained at the cost of a chemical reaction involving the rapid deterioration of expensive material, and until zinc goes down very considerably in price, or until the same result is obtained with other material more moderate in price, even the horse can hope to hold his own against this system.¹ The underground or conduit system is open to objection from the other side. The working expenditure, taken as an individual item, compares favourably with that of the overhead method, but the cost of provision is very high. The construction of the conduit necessitates an extensive alteration of the tramway track. The conduits may be either open or closed, but only the former have been applied commercially. The current in this is distributed over the road through an unprotected conductor placed in a tube

under one rail or in the centre of the track. A working example of this system is to be seen at Blackpool, where, during the twelve months ended March 25 last, the cars ran 106,668 miles, and carried 968,227 passengers, at a net profit of £524. In Budapest the traction is also—in part—of the conduit order; but it is significant that in America almost every attempt made in this direction has proved an actual or a virtual failure. Good drainage is one of the essentials to success with conduits, which may account for the outcome in the United States, where neither the drainage nor the paving of the roads calls for special admiration. Two other conditions which are necessary for all-round successful working are (a) an ample depth in the street for a conduit of sufficient capacity to prevent flooding; and (b) a traffic large enough to warrant the heavy expenditure involved in the providing and the maintaining of a conduit.

These three conditions are of serious moment, and a purely sentimental objection to overhead wires would not warrant any local authority in giving the preference to conduits. These bodies have, as a rule, shown their good sense by taking the one great drawback to the overhead system and placing it in the scale against the obvious advantages, and drawing a sensible inference. The result of this weighing in the balance is seen in the enormous and rapid growth of the overhead system, which is assuredly the most simple and economical of the three forms enumerated of electric traction. This is the system almost universal in America, where automatic con-

¹ An illustration of this is afforded by Birmingham, *vide infra*.

veyances are much better patronised than in this country,¹ because, save in one or two of the larger cities, the streets are not conducive to pleasure in pedestrian or cab traffic, and because such a busy, nervous, and enterprising people as the Americans want some means of transit more expeditious, and more reliable and less costly, than horses. In the matter of speed, however, our American friends appear to have rushed to the very opposite extreme to ourselves. We are almost too careful; they are almost too careless, with the result that the loss of life is heavy, and the overhead or trolley car has come to be known only too familiarly as the "trolley demon." On what is called the American system of overhead lines the wires are very numerous—a condition which becomes more or less of a nuisance in a busy thoroughfare. It is this multiplicity of continuous wires, with the necessary poles, to which local bodies take objection. But at the very worst the wires do not spoil the streets half so effectually as telegraph wires; and that one town at least does not regard the objection as insuperable is apparent from the fact that Leeds, which was the first to adopt the trolley cars on its Roundhay Park section, has just decided to provide its whole system (save for one small portion which is to be supplied by conduits) with overhead wires. The Bristol Tramways and Carriage Company (Limited) has, in common with Leeds and Walsall, shown a good example to the rest of the country by opening four miles of trolley-track between the city and the populous suburbs of St George and Kingswood. The

overhead system is, in the abstract, best adapted for streets and suburban districts requiring and capable of rapid movement, with a minimum of stoppages; while the conduit system seems more likely to meet the requirements of busy thoroughfares, where the traffic is usually large enough to warrant the expense. But the installations at Buda-Pesth and Blackpool are the only noteworthy examples of the conduit system; and even in districts where the traffic of all sorts is heavy, the trouble with the overhead wires cannot be so serious as to outweigh all considerations of greater economy and less wear and tear. Besides, even this objection has now been largely removed. That part of the South Staffordshire tramways which is worked by trolley is equipped by a method which greatly reduces the number of wires, there being no cross or pull-over wires, and only half the number of poles used on the American lines.

There remains cable traction as a substitute for horses. Briefly, cable haulage is made possible by means of an endless wire-chain concealed in a tube below the surface of the road, and kept constantly moving in one direction at a given maximum speed from a power-station. The movement of the car is regulated by means of a gripper mechanism which passes through a slot in the road. This system was brought out at San Francisco in the year 1873, and is rapidly extending. Not so rapidly, however, as the trolley, although almost universal experience has shown it to be much more economical to work, and although it is best of all adapted for heavy traffic. The

¹ The average number of trips per citizen per annum in America is 226; in Great Britain 140.

cable systems in the United Kingdom are four—those at Brixton, Highgate Hill, Birmingham, and Edinburgh. It may be added that the Brixton tramway has just been extended from Brixton Hill to the Public Library at Streatham; and that Edinburgh is so satisfied with the working and the prospects of the six miles of cable on the Edinburgh Northern Tramways Company's line that it has leased its entire system to Messrs Dick, Kerr, & Co. for twenty-one years, and Mr W. N. Colam—who was largely concerned with the introduction of the system into England, and who is also acting for Newcastle Corporation in the conversion of half their whole system—is just now preparing the designs for cabling twenty-four additional miles of its streets. As compared with the trolley, the initial cost of a given length of cable track is high; but we on this side have introduced a variation from the American method. We make the tube in which the rope runs much more shallow than do American contractors; and this, while not detracting in the least from the efficiency of the tube to fulfil its purpose, very appreciably reduces the original outlay. As showing the difference in constructional cost between the two in America, we may put forward the following estimates for three miles of double track at a speed of eight miles per hour with thirty cars, giving a two minutes' headway, the cars running $19\frac{1}{2}$ hours per day:—

CONSTRUCTIONAL COST.

Electricity.

	Dollars.
Road-bed	163,822·80
Special street construction	1,811·50
Overhead construction	16,361·40
Carry forward	181,995·70

	Dollars.
Brought forward	181,995·70
Special overhead construction	418·00
Power-house and plant	134,750·00
Rolling stock and equipment	74,625·00
Car-barn and repair-shops	40,000·00
Auxiliary appliances	8,650·00
Engineering, legal, and miscellaneous, at \$5000 per mile	15,000·00
Total for three miles double track	455,438·70

Cable.

Power-house and plant	102,000·00
General street construction	304,396·00
Special street construction	28,500·00
Rolling stock	33,000·00
Car-barn and repair-shops	37,500·00
Auxiliary appliances	6,050·00
Engineering, legal, and miscellaneous, at \$4000 per mile	12,000·00
	523,446·00

The working cost of this three-mile line works out in each case as follows:—

WORKING COST (PER DAY).

Electricity.

	Dollars.
Twelve tons of coal at \$2·50	30
Water, oil, and grease for engines, generating-cars, and motors	10
Depreciation of plant and rolling-stock	38
Sixty-six motor-men and conductors at \$2	132
Engineers, firemen, and dynamotenders	25
Car-house service, inclusive of cleaning, inspection, &c.	20
Power and car-house expenses	6
Track service	8
Repairs to engines, generators, line machinery, electric-power equipment, and miscellaneous	13
Repairs to cars, trucks, and motors	78
Carry forward	360

Brought forward	Dollars.	360
Repairs to track, overhead construction, and buildings	47	
Track-cleaning, train and shop expenses	14	
Injury to persons and property	10	
Legal, secret service, and insurance	8	
Licences and taxes	7	
General and miscellaneous expenses	32	
Total	478	

Cable.

Five and a half tons of coal at \$2.50	133
Water, oil, and grease	34
Depreciation of rope	35
Sixty-six grip-men and conductors at \$2	132
Power and car-house service	28
Track service	8
Repairs to engines and line machinery	2
Repairs to grips and cars	7
House, track, and cable expenses	6
Repairs to track and buildings	6
General and miscellaneous expenses	23
Injury to persons and property	4
Licences and taxes	7
Total	275

An analysis of these figures will show the cable to be 3d. per car mile cheaper than electricity, when working with a 2-minute headway. It is generally admitted—it is, in fact, incontrovertible—that the cable is the more economical in working. This, of course, is not the only consideration. Whatever its merits—and they are great—cable traction labours under some conspicuous drawbacks. Its superiority over electricity, over and above cheapness, may be summarised thus: that (1) no unsightly poles, overhead cross-wires, or trolley wire are needed along the whole length of each track; that

(2) there is no sparking at the trolley or the car wheels to frighten horses; that (3) there is less wear of metals (the load being less), and the additional advantage of a rolling load as compared with the grinding load on the electric car; that (4) cable cars are silent on the road—there is no buzzing of motors, or rattle of gearing; that (5) there is no danger from falling overhead wires; that (6) a very large number of extra cars can be put upon a route to meet an emergency at a very slight increase of cost. On the other hand, the advantages of electric over cable traction, are: that (1) there is no central slot to catch horses' shoes or bicycle wheels, and only two rails instead of three for wheels to "skid" against; that (2) all the power generated at the electric station is utilised, whereas by cable three-fourths of the total power generated is used in hauling the cable, however few the number of cars running may be; that (3) electric cars may be run at varying speeds, and so make up for any loss of time, which is not the case with cables; that (4) the cable mode of construction involves repairs and interference with the traffic on the streets, which is not the case with electric cars; that (5) the latter can accommodate themselves to street traffic, whilst cable cars cannot, as their speed is regulated by the cable, and they cannot move backwards; that (6) a broken or blocked cable stops the whole route, both up and down—for in that event the cars have to be hauled by some supplementary power off the streets, and the cable service up and down is suspended until the repairs are completed (which must mean a considerable waste of time and opportunities), whereas a breakage

in the electric wire is purely local, and as the motor-cars can move either backwards or forwards, the service can be continued by using the opposite track for both traffics, or changing cars at the point of fracture; that (7) there is less likelihood of traffic being stopped for the renewal of wire leads than of cables—for instance, no new wires have yet had to be fixed in Roundhay Road, though they have been up three years, whereas cables have to be renewed every year, though by careful daily examination this is often done in the night; that (8) in the event of brake-power failing on a decline, control is maintained over the electric car by reversing the motor, while cable cars cannot reverse but must go with the cable or run away; that (9) cars lit by electricity are far more comfortable and convenient for passengers; that (10) in the event of supercession by another system, the materials and work totally lost would be much less in the electric than in the cable system; and that (11) the electric overhead system has a greater field of improvement open to it in regard to cost than the cable system.¹

It was this last group of considerations that induced the city engineer of Leeds to recommend the adoption of electricity. Mr Hewson, in his report, gives exhaustive estimates of the cost of remodelling the existing tramways, and bringing them up to a 7½ minutes' service. On the present system the capital involved would be £265,884, with an annual charge of £117,292. To provide an electric system for Leeds would mean an original expendi-

ture of £378,499, and an annual expenditure of £90,072; while a cable system would cost £428,922 for construction, with an annual outlay of £101,819. If the capital investment were the only or the main factor in the business, Leeds would be foolish to desire a change. It is not the smallest capital sum, however, but the smallest annual cost, which is of most consequence to the ratepayers. The capital involved is in a sort of un-uniform inverse ratio to the annual cost; and, as Mr Hewson puts it, "this arises out of the fact that the works and plant on which the larger capital sums are expended are of varying degrees of permanence, and as such have to be repaid more or less rapidly than the system involving a smaller capital outlay. On the other hand, this larger expenditure on less permanent works often makes it possible to work at so much smaller a car mile cost as that it more than repays the increased annual liability arising from the larger capital account." In other words, a small capital expenditure means larger working expenses than the systems involving large capital expenditure.

In Birmingham there are four methods of traction in daily operation, and a comparison of the earnings and expenditure of the four would be of unusual value were the electric system in use the overhead or the conduit one. But, owing to a singular concatenation of circumstances, the accumulator system was forced upon the Birmingham Central Tramways Company. We have already stated that this is the most expensive of all the available methods, and the experience of Birmingham may be

¹ City of Leeds: Report on the various systems of trainway haulage, by the City Engineer, Thomas Hewson, M.Inst. C.E.

offered as a standing warning to any corporation against its adoption. By the courtesy of the secretary, we are enabled to pre-

sent the following figures, picked out from the balance-sheet for the twelve months ended June 30th last :—

TRACTION.	Miles run.	Receipts per mile run.	Expenses per mile run.	Balance to Revenue per mile run.
		Pence.	Pence.	Pence.
Steam . .	1,273,342	15·77	9·11	6·66
Horse . .	705,059	9·49	8·67	·82
Cable . .	742,805	11·86	5·43	6·43
Electric . .	138,925	15·70	18·43	{ 2·73 (loss)

Converted into sterling, we find a balance of £35,351, 0s. 5d. to the credit of the steam department, £2394, 7s. 1d. to the credit of horse, and £19,914, 6s. 1d. to the credit of the cable, while the year's loss on the electric section was £1735, 12s. 8d. It has to be stated, however, that in 1893-94 the electric line yielded a profit of 2·09d. per mile run, and in 1890-91 a profit of 5·25d. per mile, but that in both the intervening periods there were losses—in 1891-92 of 2·14d. per mile, and in 1892-93 of 0·17d. per mile. The working cost of this installation is really abnormal. The cost per car mile on the South Staffordshire electric system is only 4·06d., and that of the Liverpool Overhead Railway is about a farthing more. About 5d. or 5½d. per mile represents the average cost of an overhead system in Europe. Were Birmingham supplied, therefore, with the trolley cars, the profit per mile would exceed 11d., which would be extraordinary. But the district served is a very busy one; and if the figures given above prove nothing more in regard to electric traction, they show that

this method of traction does attract passengers. It is satisfactory to learn that Birmingham is looking forward to the adoption of overhead wires. There can be no two opinions as to the working of the cable cars in Birmingham. The evidence afforded by the returns—which have from the very beginning been of the same satisfactory character—is borne out by the experience of Edinburgh. During 1894 the total receipts of the Edinburgh Northern Cable Tramways Company's line of 5½ miles were £16,191. The expenses ran to £8652, thus giving 53·77 as the percentage of expenses to receipts. The mileage run in the twelve months was 356,827, and on this basis the receipts per mile were 10·79d., and the disbursements 5·81d. The latter would have worked out at less than 5d. per mile, but for the fact that the Company is compelled to work a one-horse bus, on which they lose £320 per annum, and but for the additional fact that the general charges were nearly double the average, because the directors, engineer, and secretary are resident in London, which latter circumstance makes an appreciable dif-

ference in the operations of a small line. A fair estimate of the progress made in the last three years is afforded by a comparison of the results of the first nine and a half months of 1892 with those of the corresponding period of 1895. The receipts in 1892 were £10,833; last year they were £12,532, being an increase of £1699, or 15½ per cent per mile of street. The number of passengers increased from 2,332,873 to 2,920,171, and the average per car run per day went up from 619 to 747, which is remarkable, as showing that mechanical power is capable of taking per car as much in a poor district as horses in a rich one.

It is worth while stating, in the light of the above figures, and as bearing out our remarks relative to higher working expenses on horses and steam lines, that on the Aberdeen trams the proportion of expenses to receipts is 75·23 per cent; at Belfast 76·52; at Cambridge 65·13; at Croydon 85·616; at Derby 86·25; at Glasgow 93·185; at Gloucester 87·305; at Ipswich 95·93; at Leamington and Warwick 86·77; at Liverpool 90·695; on the London Street Tramways lines 81·84, and on the London Southern Tramway lines 91·92; at Manchester 92·02; at Middlesborough 89·485; at Paisley 101·415; at Rothesay 77·37; at Sheffield 81·055; and at York 74·785. These are horse lines; the following are steam: Accrington 76·19 per cent; Birmingham (Birmingham and Midland) 81·57; Bradford 69·30; Burnley 60·705; Bury, Rochdale, and Oldham 87·455; Dublin and Lucan 94·82; Dudley and Stourbridge 80·98; Gateshead 66·55; North Shields and Tyne-mouth 103·25; North Stafford-

shire 64·215; St Helens 77·325, and South Staffordshire 88·33.¹ Even the lowest of these proportions compares badly with the 46 per cent of the Birmingham and the 53·77 per cent of the Edinburgh cable cars.

By reason of its adaptability for the haulage of very heavy loads, the cable method of traction has been introduced on to a few of our railway systems. It is especially valuable—because it is as efficient as steam, and much more economical—for drawing big waggon-loads through tunnels, &c., in the neighbourhood of large cities. The cable installation on the North British Railway at Glasgow is an illustration in point; and it cannot be doubted, we think, that the acknowledged success of this experiment will lead eventually to its general adoption for this specific purpose. It is quite conceivable that it would prove cheaper also to work many local passenger lines by cable than by steam. France, which, with Germany, is a long way ahead of us in this matter of automatic street traction, possesses a cable railway of which we have good accounts. On one of the French canals, too, the barges are kept in motion by cables instead of by horses. It would conduce to more rapid despatch, and at the same time prove a charity, if this particular movement were to spread.

Any one who has visited the United States, or the big cities of the Continent, must have a very lively sense of our backwardness in the application of automatic means in the propulsion of street cars. Including the small installations at Ryde, Brighton, South-end Carstairs, and St Peter's Port

¹ From the latest reports available.

(Guernsey), we have fifteen electric tramways in the United Kingdom. Of cable systems we can boast of but four (which are enumerated above) in actual operation. In the United States the total mileage of street railways is 13,588, of which 10,363 is electric, 1,914 horse, 632 cable, and 679 steam and miscellaneous. As showing how the horse is being superseded, it may be added that in 1892 there were 4,460 miles of track worked by this means. In the same year there were only 5,939 miles of electric track. In Boston, Mass., which has 270 miles of trolley, the proportion of expenses to receipts is 55 per cent. One interesting development in America is the consolidation of interests, whereby

a passenger may transfer from one company's line to that of another without having to pay two or more fares. Another and a notable feature is the transformation of the street railways of each city of the Union from companies of local and, as a rule, insignificant position into powerful corporations, operating many miles of road, and having their securities held and appreciated by investors in all parts of the country—for most of them pay good dividends. This is an aspect of the general question deserving of attention at home. For whether the mode of traction adopted be cable or electric, it is beyond doubt that both are more economical and more expeditious than either horses or steam-engines.

A PILGRIMAGE TO KERBELA.

ACROSS the desert beyond Babylon, and west of the Euphrates, stands Kerbela, one of the sacred shrines of the Faithful, or, to be more correct, of one sect of them. The burial-place of Husain the Martyr, grandson of the Prophet, Meshed Husain, is considered second, in point of sanctity, only to Mecca and Medina, and hither each year come thousands of pilgrims, from the Shiah countries of Asia, to offer up prayers.

Mahomedans divide themselves into two principal sects—Shiah and Sunni—the Persians representing the bulk of the former, the Turks of the latter. The chief points on which they differ are the condition of the soul after death and the succession of Caliphs. "The Sunni belief is, that there is one immortal God, whose works are without beginning or end, and that he will be visible to the souls of the blessed; whilst the Shiahs deny the immortality of the soul, and maintain that the co-existent principles of Zoroaster will for ever contend for the mastery." With regard to the Prophet's successors, the Sunnis claim that the lawful successor of Mahomed was Abu Bekr, and after him Omar, Osman, and Ali (nephew and son-in-law of Mahomed); the Shiahs, however, reject the first three, and hold that Ali was the only legitimate successor. Shiahs pray but three times a-day, and enjoin pilgrimages to Nejef, Kerbela, Kazimain, Meshed (Persia), Samara, and Kum, as well as to Mecca and Medina. Sunnis make pilgrimages only to the two latter cities, and pray five times a-day. From this it can be readily under-

stood that the circumstance of the Turks being in possession of the shrines of Nejef (Meshed Ali), Kazimain, and Kerbela is most displeasing to devout Shiahs.

Without entering fully into early Mahomedan history, it may be interesting to briefly mention the causes which led to the special sanctity of Kerbela. Mahomed's only son, Kassim, died in early youth; at the Prophet's death, therefore, the question of a successor became a great difficulty. There were two likely candidates for the office: Ali, who had married his first cousin, Fatima (Mahomed's daughter), and Abu Bekr, the father of Mahomed's young wife, Ayesha. Ali refused to put himself forward, and Abu Bekr, having a large following, proclaimed himself first Caliph. Omar became second and Osman third Caliph, and after the latter, Ali himself assumed the Caliphate. Ali was murdered in the mosque at Kufa about A.D. 661, and his two sons, Hassan and Husain, were fugitives. The persecution of the Ali faction continued, and a few years later Hassan was poisoned at Medina. At the request of his party Husain attempted to return to Kufa, but was intercepted on the way and slain in battle at Kerbela, where his remains were interred. His death took place on the ninth day of the month Muharram, A.H. 61 (9th October 680 A.D.), under circumstances of a most tragic nature. The martyrdom of the two grandsons of the Prophet appealed to the oriental mind, and the story of their death became the subject of a Passion-play, which, even after the lapse of 1200 years, excites the fanati-

cism of faithful Shiāhs almost to frenzy.

The sun had barely risen on the little town of Towé Riché when we set out on our last day's march to Kerbela. Our party consisted of three Englishmen, a *kawass* as escort, a Persian servant, and the owners of our three pack-ponies; and a strange sight we must have presented among the horde of pious pilgrims hurrying forward to the sacred shrine.

The road is densely thronged: here comes a little band of Persians, the men simply clothed, and wearing black or white skull-caps. Mules with *kawajahs*, or panniers, carry the women and children of the party, two or three on either side, and the poor beasts look terribly overladen. Some are weighed down with enormous curtained frameworks, concealing the fairest of the harem, while others bear a couple of rude coffins, containing the bones of the elders of the family, being conveyed for burial to the neighbourhood of Kerbela. The remains have often been kept for months, and as the coffins are generally old packing-cases hastily put together, the stench issuing therefrom is frequently overpowering. White asses there are in numbers, bestridden by the heads of the families or their wives, clad in long blue gowns, trousers, and the inevitable veil, hiding everything except their black eyes. Turcomans, looking fierce in their sheep-skin hats; Biluchis, with unkempt locks; natives of India, and solitary pilgrims from Yarkand and the outlying Mahomedan countries of Asia,—all mix in the crowd, pushing forward to reach Meshed Husain before the close of the Muharram festival.

For two hours we rode in this strange company, cheered by the

tinkling of the mule-bells and the chatter of the people; and then we left the main road and struck across country. The ride was full of little incidents, and at times almost exciting. The track that we followed was a short cut, and crossed numerous canals and water-courses, which had to be forded. Some of these were deep and muddy, and getting up and down the slimy banks was no easy matter. The *kawass* proved himself a fearless guide, and though on one occasion his horse slipped on a bank and rolled over with him into four feet of water, his dignity never forsook him, and on emerging from his bath he merely shook himself and frowned at our cruel jeers. We all had mishaps of one kind or another, and twice my little beast lost his footing and let me down. During part of the day's march we passed through extensive tracts of grazing-ground, where we came across an immense number of sheep and camels. These latter animals represent the wealth of the Arabs, a man being accounted rich or poor according to the number he possesses. If he have a hundred camels he is considered wealthy, while the owner of no more than ten is poor. The colour of the beasts varies considerably in these parts, ranging from dark brown to snowy white, and the young ones are the funniest little things imaginable, resembling the fluffy toy-donkeys of our nursery days.

As we approach the outskirts of Kerbela we get among the pilgrims again, and the country far and wide is dotted with groups of travellers. At length a high-arched bridge leads us over a canal, and we enter the palm-groves and burial-grounds which surround the sacred spot. The cemeteries extend for miles, as the Shiāh who

is fortunate enough to be buried within the precincts of Kerbela gains for his soul the certainty of a place in Paradise.

Beyond the palm-groves we find gardens shaded by orange, fig, and mulberry trees, for the country is fertile and well-watered by the Nahr Husainieh, one of the numerous canals fed by the Euphrates. A high brick wall encircles the town, and on passing through the gate the principal street of the town is at once entered. It is wide and roofed over, and densely crowded with gaily-dressed orientals, who, however, pay little attention to our cavalcade. We had a letter of introduction to the Nawab (the British Agent), to whose palace we at once repaired and received a hearty welcome. Apartments were handed over to us, and an excellent rooftop, on which we principally dwelt: food also was provided, and we were fain to partake of rice, kabobs, pillau, and other native fare, with the sweetest of sugary sherbet. Our host, who laid himself out to please us, came with each meal, and, attended by half-a-dozen retainers, considered it his duty to watch us eat. At first this was rather disconcerting, and the endeavour to keep up a flowing conversation in Hindustani a sore trial. The talking part of the entertainment fell on my shoulders, my companions pleading ignorance of the language, and as I exhausted every topic at the first sitting, I got to regard these gatherings as anything but a pleasure. In time, however, we forgot the presence of the Nawab and his party, and they conversed among themselves while we did the same, and I honestly believe that it was a relief to all. The ladies of this strictly Mahomedan household did not put in an appearance; but we were

aware that the courtyard, wherein we feasted, was overlooked by the lattices of the harem, and we frequently caught a glimpse of several pairs of almond eyes evidently enjoying the fun. My companions were anxious to start a Zenana Mission on the spot, but I refused to interpret for them, and so they were forced to abandon the project.

The day after our arrival was the anniversary of Husain's death—a day of universal mourning, when the feelings of the people, worked upon by ten days' grief, fasting, and prayer, were liable to carry them away. Hamadi, our Persian servant, professed to be a good Shiah, and, clothed in new raiment, attended frequently at the great mausoleum. He refused to take us about the place, and appeared, moreover, to regard us somewhat in the light of an encumbrance; thus knowing that a fanatic sticks at nothing for the salvation of his soul, we began to think that it would have been wiser to have deferred our visit until after the Muharram. We determined, however, to see the matter through at any cost, and we had the satisfaction of feeling that we had revolvers handy, and could at any rate send half-a-dozen souls to Paradise before we were finished off. The Nawab seemed rather uneasy at having us under his roof, conscious, no doubt, that he was more or less responsible to the Turks for our safety. I told him that we should like to see the town and what was going on, at which his face fell, and he assured us that to walk abroad at this season would be to court great danger, the place being full of fanatical and wild Asiatics, for whose actions no one could be accountable. One of his attendants, however—a Persian, with some knowledge of the world (acquired during a pilgrimage to

Mecca and a visit to India)—rose to the occasion, and told the Nawab that he would show us everything that was possible, and would vouch for our safety, if we were careful in our bearing towards the people.

Under the guidance of our new friend, and escorted by a body-guard of eight *zaptiehs* armed with rifles, we were shown the sights of Kerbela. The narrow street was filled with noisy, jostling natives, whom the *zaptiehs* unceremoniously pushed aside out of our way: why no one resented this officiousness I cannot think, but, with the exception of an occasional surly look and a muttered curse, we received no incivility. Kerbela contains five mosques, the most important of which is the Mosque of Husain, standing almost in the centre of the town. It is, of course, quite impossible for an unbeliever to enter the sacred enclosure, but from the high roof of a neighbouring house, to which our guide conducted us, we obtained an excellent view of the whole building. As we approached the mosque the Persian ordered us to quicken our pace and follow him closely without stopping. Then hurrying through a narrow bazaar, where trade appeared to be brisk, we passed the principal gate of the mosque, through which the pilgrims were pouring in hundreds.

The gateway was large, and beautifully decorated with Arabic inscriptions and scrolls: at one side hung a massive chain, which each person as he passed kissed reverently. Within the gate we could see a courtyard paved with gaudy tiles, and filled with booths and stalls for the sale of relics and Kerbela stones, the latter being small brick slabs made out of dust from the shrine, and much sought after by pilgrims. We caught but a glimpse of the interior, for even

hurrying by as fast as we were able, we noticed that the crowds who lined the narrow street were regarding the presence of the infidels with anything but good humour. All eyes were turned towards us, and flashing unmistakable looks of hatred and anger at our intrusion. The word *Kaffir*, and other expressions which (perhaps happily) we did not understand, were freely made use of, and we found ourselves suddenly hustled through a narrow gateway in a wall, and the door slammed behind us. "Just in time," said the Persian; "they don't like Christians looking at their mosque, and Christians have never been here before in Muharram-time."

Our sanctuary was a pleasant little garden in front of a house of some pretensions. The owner, who was a relation of our Persian friend, received us very kindly, and served us with coffee and pipes, after discussing which we retired to the roof, whence we looked down into the courtyard of the mosque, and obtained a magnificent view of the town and the surrounding country.

In plan the mosque is almost a perfect square, and covers a considerable area. The four outer walls face the cardinal points and have seven gateways—one to the south and two on each of the other sides. The names of the gates are—south, Bab el Kibl; east, Kathi el Hagât and es Safi; west, el Zeneb and es Sultani; and north, es Soddar and Sahna el Sirir. Within the outer enclosure is a wide paved courtyard; then a second wall with seven gates, and handsome minarets surmounting the southern angles. Another courtyard follows, on the western side of which are three holy spots—the place where Husain fell, the tomb of his child Said Ibrahim,

and the tomb of his banner-bearer Habib ibn Mazakir. The third enclosure wall has five gates, and within it is the tomb of the seventy warriors who fell with Husain, and the supposed birthplace of Jesus. Lastly, in an open space, stands the Holy of Holies—the great domed mausoleum of Husain Shah, the sole entrance to which is by the Bab el Murael, or Gate of Hope. Within are two tombs, that of Imam Husain, and of his two sons Ali Akhbar and Ali Azrar. The dome is a magnificent and costly work of art, being tiled with slabs of pure gold, and inlaid with Koranic inscriptions and other designs in various-coloured enamel. When we saw it, however, its beauty was partly concealed by a black drapery, on which was embroidered a verse from the Mahomedan Bible, while at its summit floated the black flag of mourning in honour of the Martyr. The courtyards were seething with people, and in one part of the enclosure the Passion-play was being enacted, dense crowds gathering round the impromptu stage, and covering every available space on the roofs of the booths and tops of the walls. Streams of worshippers were passing into and out of the tomb-chamber, which, from our lofty point of view, resembled for all the world a mammoth hive, with countless bees swarming round its solitary entrance.

Close by the Mosque of Husain is a somewhat similar though smaller one, that of another martyr—Abbas, Husain's half-brother. Like its great neighbour, it was clothed in mourning draperies, and receiving due attention from bands of devout pilgrims.

As the hour for evening prayer drew near we left our quiet retreat and made our way back to our

quarters, where we met the Nawab just on the point of starting for the mosque. Mounted on a superb black Arab horse, whose colour showed off to advantage the crimson saddle and massive silver trappings, sat the fine, imposing figure of our host, looking, in his costly silken robes, "every inch a king." Around him were his numerous attendants, for the great man was going to pray in state and as befitted his position. One thing amused us not a little: Hamadi, evidently in order to gain importance in the eyes of Kerbela, had attached himself to the Nawab's staff, and assumed a prominent place in the procession. If they could only have seen the dirty scoundrel in the desert, surrounded by his cooking-pots!

The most interesting feature in the celebration of the Muharram took place that night after dark, and consisted of a monster procession of mourners. Again we were indebted to the Persian *haji* for obtaining a good view of all that went on. At 8.30 we were conducted by back-streets to the shop of a cloth-merchant, which had upper windows at the corner of the streets leading from the Mosque of Abbas to that of Husain. Here, seated on bales of cotton goods bearing the name of a Manchester firm, we looked down on the weird scene beneath us. No lights were permitted in our apartment for fear lest a sight of the "accursed Kaffirs" might rouse the people, whose religious frenzy was now at its highest pitch. I do not think that the merchant himself was too well pleased at our presence, for on the approach of the first procession I heard him whisper to our guardian, "If they are seen, my house will be burnt down." However, here we were, and here we had every intention

of remaining, unless the fanatics made it too warm for us.

At nine o'clock the gates of the smaller mosque are thrown open, and a chorus of voices is heard chanting the monotonous refrain, "Husain! Husain! YA HUSAIN!" Then commences one of the most marvellous and harrowing spectacles that it is possible to imagine. Each Shiah country is represented by its band of mourners, headed by torch-bearers and trumpeters, the Persians leading the way. Down the narrow street, now ablaze with light from the flickering torches, slowly moves a party of a hundred olive-skinned fanatics stripped to the waist, and beating time with frantic energy on their breasts, as they shout forth their dirge-like song. Beneath our window the procession halts, and, facing inwards, the two lines of seemingly demented beings beat faster on their breasts, and shout till their lungs threaten to burst. Cries of "Husain!" given forth at times in a wild piercing shriek, rend the air and almost deafen us. The blows are beginning to tell, for, after all, the bodies are but human. The hands of the mourners become tinged with blood, still they do not desist, but rather strike the harder; their fanaticism has apparently destroyed all sense of pain. Suddenly one of the group leaves his place, and, turning in our direction, utters a yell. Instinctively we draw back, thinking that we have been discovered; but our fears prove groundless, for the maniac merely falls forward on his face and heaps dust on his head, returning shortly to the ranks. A few others go through the same performance, and the procession passes on to Husain's mosque.

Khojahs from India follow, then

a small party of Shiah Arabs, like the Persians, all beating wildly on their breasts and singing lustily. Last of the mourners come the strange forms of the Turcomans, clad in long sheepskin coats and adorned with shaggy head-dresses of astrakhan. Their appearance is fierce and warlike, each bearing in his hand a drawn sword, which he brandishes aloft, evidently with the intention of showing his desire to wipe out Husain's enemies, should opportunity offer. Later on in the night, when the Passion-play is being witnessed for the last time, these strange devotees not unfrequently lacerate themselves in a terrible manner with their weapons, and two or three self-inflicted deaths, we are told, occur at Kerbela every year during the Muharram.

The procession of pilgrims occupied an hour or more, when the scene changed, and we found ourselves suddenly plunged into the story of the martyrdom. The chief characters of the Passion-play filed by, and though the attempts at realistic representation were almost ridiculous in our sober eyes, they doubtless appealed to the religious susceptibilities of the Faithful. White horses, with red paint pouring from countless impossible wounds, were ridden by children, intended to represent the offspring of Husain. Then came the female relations of the martyr, the standard-bearer, and a host of warriors, and lastly the corpse of the hero himself, borne on a bier and freely bedaubed with blood. These all made their way, amidst much weeping and lamentation, to the mausoleum, whence towards midnight they returned.

The light of the last torch had died out, and the streets were dark and silent. The pilgrims, wearied with their long season of prayer,

had gone off to their various quarters. Presently, from the direction of the Mosque of Abbas, we heard the sound of many voices uplifted in song: the sounds grew louder, and again a row of torch-bearers entered the street, followed by a procession of Moullahs chanting a not unmelodious hymn. The sight presented by the long line of aged priests, clothed from head to foot in spotless white, was most impressive. Advancing slowly and solemnly up the street, no trace of fanaticism in their movements, they showed too plainly by their careworn faces how they had been spending the previous week, while their earnest voices told of their religious zeal. They moved like men walking in their sleep, with lustreless eyes gazing into space, and they passed quietly on to the last resting-place of their saint, when silence once more took possession of the town.

All was over. We had lived in a new world; we had seen people, at ordinary times quiet and apathetic, reduced to a state bordering on madness by no other means than the remembrance of a tragedy twelve centuries old. In these enlightened days the whole thing seems too extraordinary to be believed, and yet we are told that what we witnessed is nothing to what sometimes takes place on these occasions, when blood flows freely from the self-inflicted wounds of the demented mourners. We had, however, seen enough—our heads were dizzy with looking on the strange sights; and as we wended our way homewards, through the now deserted streets, we could not help thinking of the impossibility of Christianising the Mahomedans. A visit to Kerbela during the Muharram would, I am afraid, change the views of many a sanguine believer in conversion.

PROFESSIONAL CRIME.

"WHY do we imprison our criminals?" Many will turn away with impatience from a question the answer to which seems to them so obvious and simple. Others will deprecate the attempt to discuss in a magazine article a problem so difficult and intricate. This latter objection is a serious one. The question involved has engaged the attention of jurists and philosophers for two thousand years, and contemporary writers of the highest authority are at issue still respecting it. But good may come of the discussion all the same, if some of the thoughtless many should be led to think, and any advance, however slight, can be made towards a solution of a problem of such practical importance.

Of course, the stereotyped answer to this question will be forthcoming at once: first, to punish; secondly, to reform; thirdly, to deter. And this is regarded by many persons "of light and leading" as possessing all the authority of an axiom, and the statement is supposed to settle the matter once for all. But in these days everything is questioned, and even the matured wisdom of the wise is put to the test of inquiry. Why, then, should we punish our criminals at all? We are not atheists or infidels in Christian England. Not yet, at least. As a nation we believe in a life to come and a judgment to come. Why, then, should we not leave the criminals to be dealt with hereafter, like other wrongdoers, by infinite wisdom and justice? If society is under obligation as a matter of duty to punish crime, what shall be said for

our First Offenders Acts and other legislation specially intended to give exemption from punishment? From this point of view every injured person who fails to prosecute a criminal, and every judge who fails to sentence him when convicted, violates a far higher duty than any which the State can either impose on him or absolve him from. In a word, such a duty, if it exists, must depend upon a divine law, and that we recognise no such law the statute-book and the daily practice of our criminal courts give overwhelming proof. Indeed there is something really grotesque and almost amusing in the suggestion that the sentence column in our assize calendars anticipates the award of the Great Assize to come. One man goes to penal servitude for a lengthened term, while another, convicted of a crime as heinous, escapes with a few months' imprisonment. In the one case, as in the other, the main consideration with the judge is not the guilt of the criminal, but the good of the community. The more this matter is looked into, the plainer the conclusion will appear that no transcendental obligation to punish wrongdoers is recognised by our law, as nowadays administered. That society has a right to punish crime is indisputable, just as a parent has a right to chastise his child. But to recognise an *obligation* to do this, in either case, is only to provide an excuse and a cloak for judicial or parental excess in the exercise of the right. The right to show mercy is higher and greater than the right to punish, and may be freely exercised where punishment will lead to no good

result. If punishment cannot justify itself by its effect in benefiting either the delinquent himself or the community,—if, in a word, it ceases to be a means to an end,—it degenerates at once into cruelty, and brutalises those who inflict it. The principle here in question is now so clearly recognised that it is unnecessary to pursue the matter further. The public welfare is the highest law. And if the public welfare permits the exercise of mercy, the convicted criminal is either lightly punished, or allowed to pass from the dock at once to liberty.

This may seem to be a very off-hand method of settling a question of such intricacy. But a practical solution of a difficulty commends itself to practical men, and no one will dispute that the appeal here made to the practice of our criminal courts is legitimate and well founded. Whether it be right or wrong in principle, our legislators, judges, and magistrates are clearly at one in holding "that a court of justice is not the vicegerent of the Deity." They ignore the existence of any obligation to punish the criminal, save such as rests on them as safeguarding the interests of the community; and their estimate of those interests guides them in apportioning the penalty they impose.

Some one, perhaps, may object that it is only minor offences which are dealt with thus leniently: the public conscience would be outraged if grave and heinous crimes were not adequately punished. Whether the allegation of fact here made could, if challenged, be maintained, is a question I will not discuss. I content myself with pointing out that the appeal to public sentiment only confirms the truth of what I am contending for—namely, that the

good of the community should be the governing consideration in the punishment of crime.

But the main question here under discussion is not why should we punish our criminals, but why do we *imprison* them? And the jurists will tell us that a principal aim in doing so is their reformation. But is the reformation of criminals a duty incumbent upon the State? If so, the fact has to be accounted for that the chief agencies in exercise for the reclamation of the criminal classes, as distinguished from the prison population, are wholly independent of Government, and not even subsidised by public funds. It would probably be maintained that, while it is a wise policy on the part of the State to seek the moral good of every class of the community, the criminal classes have no special claim to consideration. No one is bound to make provision for the vermin that prey upon his crops or his stores. True it is that if he catches and cages them, his act creates an obligation to feed them and care for them—an obligation, moreover, which the law will enforce. So also if the State imprisons its criminals, the duty arises to take proper and adequate means to supply all their physical and moral needs.

Whether this duty is duly recognised under our present prison system is too wide and large a question to be discussed thus incidentally. It will certainly come up some day, and when the public conscience is awakened to it, great reforms will follow. The prison dietary is the best which skill and experience can frame to maintain the prisoner in health. But if it prove unsuitable to any particular individual, and his health fails in consequence, it is set aside at once, and under the care of the surgeon

the patient receives the nourishment his infirmities or idiosyncrasies may require. But while no effort is deemed excessive to maintain the bodily health of prisoners, the far more subtle phenomena of their inner being are ignored, and their moral ailments are treated with cast-iron rigour. The dietary of the prison religion may be unsuitable, or even repulsive, to a prisoner, but in that sphere there is no infirmary in which his case can be diagnosed and treated.

But this is a digression. All that is necessary to the argument is to point out that criminals are not imprisoned with a view to discharging a recognised obligation to reform them, but, on the contrary, that it is the fact of our imprisoning them which creates the obligation. Whether this ought to be the case is a question I will not here discuss; that it is so practically is a fact which no one will dispute. Any suggestion of legislation designed to reform the vicious or safeguard the weak is usually met by references to "Mrs Grundy" or the typical grandmother, or sneers about "morality by Act of Parliament," as though this were not the stock morality of ordinary men, who practise well-doing when it is made easy and profitable, and avoid evil-doing if it be made difficult and dangerous.

If, then, putting all mere theory aside, the punishment of criminals is practically regarded as only a means to an end, we are shut up to the conclusion that the welfare of the community is the ruling factor in the problem under discussion. To quote Sergeant Stephens' 'Blackstone,'—"The end or final cause of human punishments is not by way of atonement or expiation for the crime committed, for that must be left to the

just determination of the Supreme Being, but as a precaution against future offences of the same kind." In a word, the purpose for which imprisonment is imposed is to deter from crime. And this being accepted, two inferences follow: first, if imprisonment be unnecessary, it is inexpedient; and secondly, if it be inadequate, it fails of its purpose.

This article is not intended as a learned treatise for the enlightenment of jurists, but as a popular discussion of a question in which the interests of jurists is purely academic, but which is of urgent practical importance to the public generally. Let me then cite a case to exemplify the points at issue. The following will serve the purpose:—

"At the Old Bailey yesterday, H. J., fifty-four, a tailor, pleaded guilty to burglary. Warder T. proved previous convictions of three years' penal servitude, ten years, and fourteen years; and it was stated that he had spent thirty years of his life in gaol, and that he had been connected with some of the most notorious gangs of burglars. [The Judge] sentenced the prisoner to five years' penal servitude."

The case is taken at random from the newspapers, but it is peculiarly apt, because the sentence imposed would, on the principle now followed by the majority of judges, be considered both adequate and just. The prisoner, having been previously convicted of crime, most properly received a severer sentence than the offence for which he was found guilty would ordinarily entail. I am aware, of course, that there are persons in subordinate judicial positions who refuse to take any account of previous convictions at all, and who insist that a prisoner should be punished solely for the

crime there and then brought home to him, without any reference to his antecedents. They are fully entitled to their opinions, and whether those opinions be just and right is legitimate matter for discussion. But when they give effect to their opinions on the judgment-seat, they set themselves against the law as flagrantly as the criminals whom they send to gaol; for, rightly or wrongly, the Legislature has decided, after full and careful inquiry, and in the most definite manner, that a previous conviction of crime is to be taken into account. Five years' penal servitude, therefore, would generally be regarded as a reasonable and proper sentence in the case above described.

I emphasise this lest any one should mistake the point of my criticisms, which have to do with the system, and not with the action of the judge. With this proviso I invite consideration of the question, Why should this burglar be sentenced to five years' penal servitude? Let us approach it with minds wholly unbiassed by prejudice and untrammelled by precedent. The "vicegerent of the Deity" hypothesis is ruled out at once. No less preposterous is the suggestion that the reformation of the criminal is involved. The idea that a five years' sentence will succeed where previous sentences, some longer and some shorter, have failed, is too absurd for comment. It is obvious that the protection of the community is not only the chief but the only practical consideration which any sensible person would here take into account. But has the interest of the community been adequately safeguarded in the case? It will perhaps be urged that such a sentence is adequate to deter others from

committing burglaries. But what others? People talk as though the masses of the population were kept from crime only by its penalties. It is a slander upon the toiling, suffering poor of our great cities. If there were any truth in it, we should find that when the frosts of winter, by throwing men out of work by the thousand, make the pinch of poverty most keenly felt, crimes against property would develop and increase. But in London, at all events, experience proves that if an outbreak of burglaries be prevalent, a drop of twenty degrees Fahrenheit in the temperature will check it. As a matter of fact, crimes of this kind are the work of *professional* criminals. I do not speak of "habitual criminals," for that is a purely technical term, and it is inappropriate in this connection. There are "habitual criminals," that is, persons against whom previous convictions are recorded, who would be fitting objects of pity, and worthy of help. But the *professional* criminal is hopeless. "A good thief"—as the police phrase it—does not steal to relieve his poverty. Possibly he has a hoard hid away somewhere, but at all events he has money in his pocket, otherwise his "pals" would distrust and avoid him as being a dangerous man to work with. If he prospers at his calling, success only whets the zest with which he pursues it. When he is caught and "put away" for a term, the incident is to him what a bad fall is to a fox-hunter. Possibly he may find honest employment on discharge from prison, but before many months elapse the old restlessness and love of adventure become too strong, and he resumes his "legitimate calling." He generally resumes it immediately he regains his liberty. It may safely be predicted that before H. J. is

many weeks at large again he will have "burgled" a dozen or a score of houses in the Metropolis. To illustrate this, here is another case, taken from a still more recent newspaper, where again an old offender was, as in the case of H. J., sent back to penal servitude for five years:—

"Yesterday at the — Sessions, J. D. was indicted for receiving the proceeds of two burglaries. The jury convicted him, and Sergeant — stated that in 1890 the prisoner was sentenced to five years' penal servitude for housebreaking, and to six months' hard labour for uttering counterfeit coin. At that time he had already served five years' penal servitude. Six weeks ago he was found at midnight in the garden of a gentleman's house at Norwood, and was sentenced to three months' hard labour. Inspector — stated that although the prisoner received a gratuity upon his discharge from penal servitude, he returned to his old habits within four days."

Here then are men—and their cases are used only as representing the class to which they belong—who have deliberately outlawed themselves by choosing a career of crime. They have had warning after warning, but on each occasion they have returned to their evil courses. And now having been once again brought to justice, the State shuts them up for a period of less than four years—for such is the effect of a five years' sentence—and at the end of that term they are to be let loose on society once more to perpetrate a new series of crimes. What words are adequate to describe the folly of the whole proceeding!

But some one will demand, Is it suggested that these wretched men should be doomed to finish their lives in penal servitude as the penalty for a single crime? Whether any one should be sub-

jected for a prolonged period to the severe discipline of penal servitude is a question which I will not turn aside to discuss. If it should be decided in the negative, it only proves that a suggestion I have to offer is not so wild as some might be disposed to think. My contention is merely that in every case of the kind the public should be considered rather than the criminal, and if the interests of the public demand that the criminal should be deprived of his liberty, those interests should prevail. Whether the period for which he is to be kept in confinement should be four years or forty years, and whether the rigour of that confinement should not, after some specified term, be modified to an extent that our present prison system knows nothing of—these are questions not of principle but of policy, and purely incidental.

Not many years ago a fever epidemic was regarded with ignorant helplessness as a visitation of Providence. But in these enlightened days more intelligent views prevail. The causes which tend to produce or spread the disease are removed or checked; and when a case of fever occurs, the State intervenes, and insists that the patient shall be isolated until he can mingle again with his neighbours without danger to the public health. All I plead for is, that the same enlightened principles which now obtain in regard to sanitation shall be applied to crime. An outbreak of crime of a certain kind is due to causes as definite and as preventible as an outbreak of typhoid. And to abuse the police in the one case is as reasonable as it would be to abuse the doctors in the other. The police may catch the criminals, just as the doctors may cure the

patients. But it is wholly beyond their province to deal with the causes of the epidemic. These concern administration in a higher sense than either doctors or police have the power or the responsibility to meddle with.

The diminution of crime in England is a fact which none can question. Nor can it be doubted that certain general influences have combined to produce this result, notably the spread of education among the people, and the sensible improvement that has taken place in their social condition. Causes of this kind, however, operate but slowly and indirectly. The main factors in the problem are undoubtedly the marked advance in police efficiency, and, still more emphatically, the change so happily brought about in recent years in dealing with juvenile law-breakers, and first offenders in general. It is not easy to exaggerate the importance in this respect of measures like the Probation of First Offenders Act, or of the change in public sentiment of which that enactment is a product, and to which it has proved such a powerful stimulus. Every day there are youths brought up at our police courts, and handed over to the care of philanthropists or private friends, who a few years ago would have been sent to gaol, and thus publicly branded as criminals. And the testimony of magistrates is that only a very small minority of these are ever brought before them again for sentence. The system under which formerly the army of crime was being constantly recruited is thus no longer in operation. But something more is needed if *professional* crime is to be put down. If game preserves are being destroyed by foxes, nothing can be more admir-

able than to prevent the rearing of young foxes in the district. But this will not avail if the old foxes are left at large.

Crimes of violence there will ever be while human nature lasts; and crimes against property are inevitable in densely populated cities: but professional crime is a disgrace to the community and to the age. And the present system of dealing with professional criminals is about as sensible and as satisfactory as if, in the case supposed, the old foxes when trapped should be kept for a measured interval, and then let loose again among the covers. Moreover, the general diminution of crime only seems to make the fact more significant, that crimes of the kind attributable to professional criminals seem to increase rather than to diminish. These men are leniently dealt with on account of the ignorant use made of the judicial statistics, and they are taking advantage of it. To set a professional housebreaker at large because there are fewer criminals than formerly, is about as rational as it would be to allow "infectious cases" to mix with their neighbours because there are no longer epidemics of fever such as used to prevail.

This five years' sentence, then, is not needed in order to prevent honest people from taking to housebreaking, and it is utterly inadequate to prevent professional burglars from pursuing their "calling." To quote Blackstone again, it does not avail as "a precaution against future offences of the same kind." And if this be so, the result of the trial is a fiasco. Not to imprison housebreakers at all would, of course, betoken a still greater depth of folly, but the difference would be merely one of degree. It would be quite too

outrageously silly to let all the foxes loose at once. The mischief they do would be sensibly lessened by shutting them up turn and turn about as they are caught! We hear much of the inhumanity with which such criminals were treated formerly. Our grandchildren perchance will talk about the imbecility of the treatment accorded to them now. If judicial punishments, instead of being dreaded by law-breakers, come to be regarded merely as ordinary mishaps incidental to a criminal career, they fail of their purpose altogether.

Boys are whipped with a birch-rod; men are flogged with a "cat." Why this difference? Because it is intended that the criminal shall wince under the punishment; and the rod would not produce this effect upon full-grown men. Everybody can recognise how futile and silly it would be to order a prisoner the lash and at the same time have the infliction of it so adjusted as not to hurt him. But people fail to see that all punishment ought to produce a corresponding effect. As the author of the 'Vicar of Wakefield' puts it, "the work of eradicating crime is not by making punishment familiar but formidable."

Is it not obvious that a judicial sentence is futile if it fails to produce in the criminal even an emotional and transitory repentance? And the test of this is easily applied. If he has even mechanical remorse for his crime, if he has either the intention or the desire to break with the past, he will give proof of it by making the only reparation in his power—namely, by aiding in the restoration of the property he has stolen. But it is the exception and not the rule when he does anything

of the kind. The perverted chivalry of a thief who refuses "to betray his pal" might possibly command respect. But there is no "palship" between a thief and his "fence." The "receiver" generally cheats him, and he knows it; and if he refuses to inform against him, it is simply because he looks forward to requiring his services again. If a solicitor, in the course of professional duty, obtains possession of documents and parts with them, a competent court will compel him to disclose what has become of them. But if a thief gets hold of my property in the course of crime, no court will give me relief. Were he treated like a defaulting bailee and committed to prison till he made restitution, I should perhaps recover my own. But the unfortunate citizen who has been robbed is left out of account altogether. The only question considered is what is a proper sentence for the crime charged; and this is measured not by the statute, for in cases such as here supposed the law allows a sentence for life, but by the practice in favour at the moment. A few years ago it would have been ten or fifteen years' penal servitude, now it is three or four or five. The real question should be the guilt of the criminal, not the quality of the crime; but this is almost entirely ignored.

In former times, when the physician was called in, his duty was supposed to be to cure the disease: in our day, happily, his care is to cure *the patient*. The story was told of a famous surgeon who was at the head of the staff in the principal Dublin hospital. He was summoned to advise in a difficult case, and all were agreed that a severe operation was the only way to restore the patient's limb

to its normal shape. The consulting surgeon vetoed the operation. "But," the others remonstrated, "it will be a great slur upon the hospital to let the man go out with a crooked leg." "It will be a greater slur upon the hospital," he quietly replied, "to have him carried out in a coffin." They thought only of the leg; he thought of the patient. Will the illustration pass as indicating what it is I wish to urge? My plea is, not that exemplary and drastic punishment should be meted out to criminals, but that they should be treated on some intelligent and intelligible system; that the crassly stupid principles which formerly obtained in dealing with disease should no longer govern our treatment of crime; that in this sphere there is need for a reform as thorough as modern enlightenment has produced in regard to sanitation. As already remarked, crime is inevitable in a civilisation such as ours; but the prevalence of *professional* crime is unnecessary and disgraceful. And it might be absolutely stamped out in a single generation. No heroic measures are needed to attain that end. The task, of course, will be beset with difficulties; but the difficulties are far more definite, and therefore more easily overcome, than those which abound in regard to sanitation. The public have never realised what a triumph of organisation, backed by unceasing vigilance and sustained effort, it has been that the cholera has been kept from our shores in recent years. If but a very little of the same intelligence and care were spent on this problem of crime, the results would be as marked and as admirable.

An eminent and experienced judge is reported to have explained the system on which he

apportions sentences. He begins by considering what sentence is a proper punishment for the crime of which the prisoner stands convicted; and to this he makes a suitable addition, if previous convictions are proved against him. Mark what this means. The patient is suffering from some internal disease, and the proper treatment is the use of the knife. So the surgeon is called in, and proceeds to operate. If the medical idiosyncrasies of the patient be such that the result of the operation must prove fatal, so much the worse for the patient. This was the old system. Nowadays no effort is spared to discover his medical history and the state of his vital organs, and the result of the examination influences or controls the treatment. It is the old system we follow in the sphere of criminology. The prisoner is merely "John Doe" or "Richard Roe." His personality is left out of account altogether.

Let me test this system by a hypothetical case. "John Doe" and "Richard Roe" are convicted together of burglary. The evidence discloses no ground to distinguish between their respective cases, and therefore the sentences upon both should be equal—say, three years' penal servitude. But previous convictions are proved against them. "Doe" has already had a five years' term, and "Roe" has suffered two similar terms in convict prisons. "Doe's" present sentence, therefore, should be increased to five years, and "Roe" should be sentenced to six or seven years, on this last conviction. Nothing seems simpler or fairer than this, which, under the present system, would probably be the result of their trial. They are both "habitual criminals," but the one is just a single point worse than

the other. Now let us draw aside the curtain and disclose the facts which ought to be before the court. "Doe" was born of worthy and respectable parents, who trained him carefully and well. But at sixteen years of age he was left an orphan, and, falling among bad companions, he was ultimately drawn into crime. His offence was a serious one, and a severe judge, having nothing before him but the evidence, sent the prisoner to penal servitude for what was then the shortest term allowed by statute. When he came out on ticket-of-leave, with his character gone, and the brand of the criminal upon him, he struggled hard to earn an honest living; but no helping hand was held out to him, and soon he drifted back to the bad influences which had dragged him down at the first; and here he is again in the dock, convicted for the second time of felony.

The other man's story is very different. He took to crime in early life much as a duckling takes to the water. Kind friends did their utmost to save him, but every time they obtained employment for him he robbed his master and absconded. Again and again he escaped prosecution, but immunity seemed only to harden him, and presently he ventured on more daring flights of crime, and found himself at last in a convict prison. When he had done his term he was discharged with a gratuity of fifty shillings. This he spent in a debauch, and before the week was out he had refilled his pocket by a successful burglary. At his next attempt he again fell into the hands of the police, and in due course found himself back in penal servitude. When discharged a second time, he immediately resumed his career of crime; but experience had made

him wary and cunning, and though he has been convicted only in a single case, it is known that since his release he has been engaged in more than twenty burglaries. And more than this, when called upon to disclose what has become of the property he has stolen, he meets the demand with an insolent refusal.

With all these facts in view, what should now be done with these men? This, of course, is a matter on which opinions would differ; but the suggestion will not be deemed unreasonable that the one man might have been rescued from a criminal career had he been differently dealt with upon his first conviction, and that even now the utmost leniency might be shown him, and efforts made to save him. The second man, on the other hand, is a typical specimen of the professional criminal, and for his own sake, as well as in the interests of the community, he ought to be deprived of the opportunity to do further mischief.

It would be entirely in accordance with the spirit of our law if every prisoner were arraigned and tried as "John Doe" or "Richard Roe," every question as to his antecedents being suppressed. But once he is convicted of the offence charged, and the problem is what should be done with him, no inquiry surely can be too searching and minute respecting his character and career. I am aware, of course, that many judges use the best means at their disposal to inform themselves about the prisoner before them, and the result of their inquiry influences them in awarding sentences. Very notably is this true of the distinguished judge above referred to. But this is a thorough departure from the system. The law recognises no such inquiry, and

it is generally perfunctory, always inadequate, and sometimes misleading. If a prisoner petitions after sentence, his whole story may then be investigated in the most thorough and systematic manner, but there is no provision for laying his *dossier* before the judge in open court. The result is, that some men are sent to prison who might far better be turned over to the care of the philanthropist; and others are merely put away for a term who ought never again to be let loose upon the community.

This, of course, will set the whole pack of humanity-mongers and sham philanthropists in full cry. They will declaim loudly about the rights of criminals. But what about the rights of honest citizens who are made prey by these miscreants? What about the rights of all those who are corrupted and debauched by these moral lepers? What about the rights of the hapless offspring they are allowed to bring into the world, to be trained to a life of crime and made a curse to society? Rights! The criminal is entitled to a fair trial, and this is assured to him by English law; but other rights he has none. His right to liberty is forfeited by his choice of a criminal career. One of the many evils resulting from the toleration of professional crime is, that people are apt to lose all due sense of its heinousness. The public conscience becomes so case-hardened that such crime ceases to excite the indignation and loathing with which all honest and virtuous minds should regard it. Many crimes of violence, and not a few crimes against property, are due to sudden impulse. The circumstances may be such, perhaps, as to call for pity for the criminal. But

here we have a man who outlaws himself by declaring war upon society. Deliberately, and in cold blood, he marks out the houses he means to raid, matures his plans at leisure, and then night after night sallies forth to carry his schemes into execution. Nothing is sacred to him. The gifts of parents and friends now gone, long treasured for the memories which cling to them; mementos of the past, of little intrinsic worth perhaps, but of priceless value to their owners—anything and everything he can lay hands upon—ruthlessly appropriated, or in sheer wantonness destroyed. And this under no pressure of poverty, but in obedience to the predatory instincts of the wild beast. When brought to justice, he receives his sentence with sullen indifference or contempt. No ray of repentance, no thought of making restitution, no dream of abandoning crime, enters his mind. He goes to gaol an impenitent thief. He relieves the monotony of his prison life by planning new crimes; and if he has not already passed out his schemes for execution by confederates still at large, he immediately sets himself to accomplish them on his release. He is either hopelessly wicked or hopelessly weak. If wicked, he is wicked enough for the gallows—the gallows, indeed, seldom receives so fitting a victim; if weak, he is weak enough for an asylum.

But to set up the gallows again for such crimes would not be tolerated, and the law provides no suitable alternative. It purports, indeed, to provide one in a life sentence of penal servitude. But this is now abandoned. Such a sentence is seldom imposed, and never carried out. It would, indeed, be more cruel than the gallows. What, then, is to be

done with such criminals? My purpose here is not to make startling proposals, but merely to give expression to what nine people out of every ten would endorse. Keeping in view that the good of the community is the one element to be considered, and remembering that the law in fact authorises a life sentence in such cases, the first thing to insist upon is the distinction between the obdurate and the impenitent, and those who make their submission to the court which tries them. If a thief breaks into my house and steals my property, I look to the court to regard my wrongs before entertaining any question of the criminal's rights, and to insist on his making restitution. What has he done with my goods? If, by refusing to answer that question, he gives proof that he is a thief not merely by his acts but by his nature and intentions, it is plain that if opportunity be given him he will treat other citizens as he has treated me; and he should be finally deprived of the liberty which he uses only to the injury of others. Once he is clearly proved to be an outlaw, common justice and common-sense demand that he should be treated as an outlaw.

It must not be supposed that this is in any sense a *class* question, or that there is anything either novel or eccentric in the assertion that stronger measures are needed to cope with professional crime. The last annual report of the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis affords an answer to both these insinuations. In commenting on the statistics of burglaries and house-breakings for 1894, he says: "It is unnecessary to repeat what has been urged in previous reports respecting crimes of this character.

They are the work of professional criminals, and no substantial reduction in the number of them annually recorded can be looked for until such criminals come to be treated with adequate severity." And, with reference to the fact that in the large majority of these cases the property stolen was of trifling value, the Commissioner adds: "As usual, these crimes were perpetrated for the most part at the expense of the poor and not of the rich."

And not only are these criminals let loose again upon their neighbours, but even the means which the law provides for checking their evil practices is but little used. To any man who wishes to lead an honest life, police supervision is no real grievance. Often, indeed, it proves a distinct benefit. But to the criminal who wants unrestrained liberty to enable him to commit fresh crimes, it is galling and hateful. An excellent reason this, it might be supposed, for sentencing all criminals of the kind to a seven years' term of this tutelage; but many people seem to find in it a reason for exempting them from supervision altogether.

But even police supervision would prove inadequate to protect society. If transportation could be re-established, it would possibly meet the difficulty; but this suggestion appears chimerical. The gallows is impossible, and penal servitude for life is impracticable. The only solution of the problem, therefore, will be found in the creation of what might be described as an *asylum* prison, to which such prisoners could be drafted after completing a term of penal servitude. Good conduct would be a condition of the transfer, and grave misconduct would be punished by sending the de-

linquent back to a convict prison till he regained his character. Remunerative labour would, of course, be rigorously enforced; but there is no reason why, after the day's work is done, the prisoners should not have indulgences of a kind wholly unknown in an ordinary gaol. The monotony of prison life, which breaks down the mental powers of many a convict, might be relieved by occasional evening lectures; nor is there any reason why the musical skill of the inmates should not be utilised in entertainments now and then for the recreation of all. In these and many other ways their lot might be cheered and their lives brightened.¹ The desideratum here is not the punishment of the criminal, but the protection of the community; and so long as that end is attained by depriving him of his liberty, no alleviation of his lot need be refused which can be granted consistently with the maintenance of discipline.

Such a scheme of course is beset with difficulties, but these difficulties could be met, and experienced prison governors could be found to undertake the charge of a prison of the kind. Such men can bear testimony that many criminals whose thieving propensities are ineradicable are docile and well conducted while in gaol: as a rule, indeed, the old criminal is the best prisoner. There is but one difficulty of any serious importance, and that relates to what cannot fitly be discussed in these pages. I will dismiss it by remarking that if a life of enforced celibacy be specially

grievous in the case of men of this class, it is specially desirable in the interest of the community, and the dread of it may prove a salutary check upon their entering on a career of crime.

This, indeed, suggests what is too much ignored, that the lenity with which professional crime is now treated is constantly tending to produce criminals of this very class. If we are content, with the dull tenacity of ignorance, to regard crime of this sort in the light in which our fathers regarded epidemic diseases, there is no more to be said. But those who find in the advance which recent years have effected in the condition of the masses an incentive to further reforms more thorough and complete, will not shirk the question why professional crime should be tolerated at all. If, not occasionally, but systematically and always, thieves were compelled to disclose their disposition of their booty, something would be done to break up the whole organisation of crimes against property. And if it were once brought home to the criminal classes that crime of the character here in view would inevitably lead to a total and final deprivation of liberty, the results in a single decade would probably astonish even the most sanguine.

It will be urged, of course, that if the fear of penal servitude for life fails to produce the effect, no such scheme as is here suggested would be efficacious. But the objection is wholly untenable. As a matter of fact, such sentences, when actually imposed, do produce an ephemeral effect. When

¹ In one of the Paris prisons the inmates look out through windows—guarded of course by heavy bars, but at the usual level of windows—upon grass plots and trees where birds build their nests. And the above suggestion about prison concerts is not original. Such "social evenings" are not unknown in some of the principal American prisons.

the Muswell Hill housebreakers were thus dealt with five years ago, their sentence fell like a bombshell in the ranks of the criminals. Indeed, we have had immunity from armed burglars ever since. The theory that crime is not checked by severe sentences is an exploded fallacy.¹

But here we must learn from nature. If touching fire burned us, not always and of course, but only at times, and if we could not be certain when it would do so, the number of persons thus injured would be tenfold greater than at present. And so is it with crime and punishment. The utter uncertainty of a prisoner's fate entirely destroys the moral effect of the sentences imposed. It is unfair to the community, but it is positively cruel to the criminal. If men such as those whose cases are given in the preceding pages knew, before they set out to commit fresh crimes, that when brought to justice their liberty would be finally lost, some of them would be driven to what they deem the degradation of honest labour. The rest would by their own act give proof that, whether from badness or from weakness, they are hopeless; and such men would be fitly provided for in a retreat where opportunities to do wrong would cease, and incentives to do right would abound.

It must not be supposed, as some appear to imagine, that the new efforts recently inaugurated to facilitate the identification of criminals lessen the importance or the urgency of the main subject of this article. What concerns us is not the *identification* of professional criminals, but the disposal of them when their identity is established.

The introduction of the anthropometric system will lend expedition and accuracy to the labours of the prison and police authorities in this respect, but it will do but little besides. Some reform such as is here advocated in our method of dealing with such criminals when identified is necessary to give the system a practical value. They are well known to the police, but if it becomes a question of placing them in seclusion for life, their identity must be proved to the entire satisfaction of the public; and this the Bertillon system will provide.

It has been said that of the inmates of our prisons one half should never have been sent to prison at all, and the other half ought never to be released. Like all epigrammatic statements, this of course is an exaggeration. But it has a great element of truth in it. So long, however, as incarceration means penal servitude, it is idle to expect that judges will pass life sentences or that public feeling will tolerate them. That the existing state of things is unsatisfactory our most experienced judges fully recognise, but the needed reform must begin with the provision of asylum-prisons. A judge would then feel that in consigning a criminal to perpetual seclusion there was no element of barbarity in the sentence. And, of course, if the prisoner could at any time show reasonable grounds for believing that he might safely be released, a licence could be granted him. Certain it is that his chances of doing well would be immensely increased by the training of such a prison. It would be well indeed if every convict could be allowed a short term in some such circum-

¹ I dealt with this subject in an article entitled "Morality by Act of Parliament," which appeared in the 'Contemporary Review' of January 1891.

stances before his discharge. A caged bird turned loose is not more unfit to take care of itself than is many a man who passes suddenly from the severe restraint of penal servitude to the unbridled liberty of the streets.

Each one of the leading topics dealt with in the preceding pages would afford ample material for a separate article. The treatment of them here has, therefore, of necessity been brief and desultory. But the main issues will be generally accepted. The existence of professional crime cannot be denied; and that it is a blot upon our civilisation none will question. The evil is grave enough to demand some exceptional measures to cope with it, but its limits are not so wide as to render the task of suppressing it impracticable. And the first step to the needed reform will be to provide a substitute for the transportation system, which was finally abandoned thirty years ago. Our convict prisons have proved a decided success, but many of our present difficulties are due to the extreme severity of their discipline in the case of prisoners sentenced to prolonged terms. That discipline is devised for the *punishment* of criminals, and punishment, when unduly prolonged, becomes cruel.

An insane person is relegated to an asylum for life, not to punish him, but because the public safety requires it. And in the same way these public pests, after they have undergone their punishment, might be permanently secluded without any needless element of *punitive* discipline. The honest mechanic is compelled to support himself by his labour, and to make some contribution also to the public treasury; therefore the enforcement of this upon the secluded criminal need not be regarded as penal. In no sphere surely should the maxim be applied so unreservedly, "If a man will not work, neither shall he eat."

But here I am repeating myself. The details of such a scheme must be worked out by those who have practical experience of all the problems it would involve. It is sufficient to indicate the pressing need for such a reform, and the general principles on which it should be based. I will only add that these pages are written from the standpoint of a citizen. Police records and police experience might be appealed to in support of every suggestion made, but here I have availed myself only of information which is within the reach of all.

R. ANDERSON.

ON GUARD.

WHEN a note of warning sounds over Great Britain it must necessarily awaken echoes in other parts of the globe; and it seldom happens that our Government, when brought face to face with trouble in one quarter, finds its whole energies free for concentration upon that particular difficulty. But it has not been often in the experience of the present generation that such a diversity of dangers, so unconnected with each other, and so widely separated, has had to be simultaneously encountered, as the critical incidents that have ushered in the first New Year of Lord Salisbury's present Administration. Grave as the situation is, it has its compensations. Never have the courage, firmness, and constancy of Britons shown to greater advantage than in the presence of the accumulating menaces which during the past two months have been launched against the peace of our empire. Never did the ancient spirit of the country burst forth with more certain utterance than when the presumption or indiscretion of the German Emperor came as a climax upon our other troubles to put the nation upon its mettle. We are being assiduously reminded on all sides that we are isolated in Europe, that we have no allies, that our position was already serious enough without the chance of having to withstand a first-class European Power being added to it. Politicians who use such arguments to influence Great Britain, little understand the temper of the country. She may accommodate, she may temporise in matters where her interests are only indirectly involved; she may make, and

often has made, sacrifices in the cause of peace when concessions could be granted consistently with her honour: the conflict of parties also may have at times given a colour of weakness to the external front which she shows to the other Powers. But with the first sound of threat or insult, all party differences disappear, and the nation to a man is ready to "stand four-square to all the winds that blow."

The remarkable outburst of national and patriotic feeling which has stirred the country to its heart's core during the past month has unquestionably sprung from the full confidence that the people feel in their present leaders, and from the firm assurance that the wisdom and fortitude of Lord Salisbury and his colleagues will provide an honourable issue out of our present difficulties. Controlled by less capable statesmen, the present warlike feelings of the nation would be a cause for grave anxiety. Peace with honour is what we all look for from Lord Salisbury, but our honour is secure in his hands whatever may betide us. In the troubled prospects before us the one bright spot is that we have the present Ministry at the direction of affairs, and that they will carry with them the support and confidence of the country in whatever measure of foreign policy they may find it necessary to embark.

The most acute of our present embarrassments are due to the entanglements into which we have been led in the hopeless task of endeavouring to patch up a condition of order in the Turkish Empire for another term; and to the fact that upon Great Britain

the other signatory Powers to the Treaty of Berlin have thrown the chief share of the diplomatic labour and responsibility, without at the same time affording her the co-operation that might before this time have secured at least the prospects of a settlement. To involve as far as possible the energies of Great Britain in the settlement of the Armenian difficulty, and to carefully evade, if not directly thwart, every practicable plan for restoring peace in the Turkish provinces, and for putting the administration of the Porte upon a stable and effective footing, seems to have been the policy pursued at Constantinople by Russia and its allies. So much has Great Britain been engrossed in seeking to put an end to administrative barbarities like the Armenian massacres, that other Powers presumed that she had already as much upon her hands as she could well manage. There was a diplomatic opportuneness, therefore, in President Cleveland's selecting the moment for endeavouring to ride rough-shod over us in the settlement of our disputes with the Venezuelan Republic. We might feel that there was a lack of generosity in the ruler of "our kin beyond sea" thrusting upon us the prospect of a quarrel upon untenable grounds at a time when we could not very conveniently withdraw a ship of war from the Mediterranean, yet we made no complaints on that score. And had we not had the Eastern Question and America both upon our hands, can it be doubted that the German Emperor would have prudently postponed the declaration of his inimical attitude towards our power in South Africa until a more favourable opportunity? If the Emperor William II. expected that his telegram to President Kruger would call forth a corresponding dis-

play of sentiment to that with which the menace implied in the President's message was received in Britain, he very promptly found his mistake. The regret expressed by the great majority of the American people was generously reciprocated by all classes of the population downwards from the Prince of Wales, whose noble expression of his feelings did much to soften the asperities of the situation; and the only anxiety felt was that some easy means of escape might be afforded President Cleveland from his false position. The Kaiser's insulting telegram arrayed the country through its length and breadth against him, and drew forth such a storm of indignation, in which it were hard to say whether anger or contempt was the more prominent element, as has never in our day burst upon the head of any foreign sovereign.

Certainly the situation is serious enough; but it says much for the stout heart of the country that Ministers and public opinion can look its facts calmly in the face and devise means of meeting our several dangers. We have on our hands the Turkish difficulty, our strained relations with America, the hostile attitude in Germany, the troubles in the Transvaal, and, until the other day, a war in Ashanti. The last, which in ordinary times would have excited its full share of interest, has happily ended in a very successful "march over," that has been almost unnoticed amid our more serious preoccupations. Alas! that our satisfaction should be clouded by the loss of a life so near and dear to the Throne as that of H.R.H. Prince Henry of Battenberg.

The Transvaal difficulty has been made a matter of European discussion by the unwarranted interposition of the German Emperor, and

for a time entered into a stage so acute as to place our differences with America in the background. It sprung from an incident altogether unexpected. The Government promptly dealt with the crisis according to the strict principles of International Law; the President of the Transvaal Republic showed every disposition to co-operate with us in restoring order, while exercising his undoubted right to repress rebellion or invasion; and there was every prospect that a settlement could be quietly effected, until the sympathy of Germany was forced upon the Boers, and the anti-British party among them were excited by the prospect of being enabled to throw off the controlling power which Great Britain by the Convention of 1884 has the right to exercise over the foreign relations of the Boer Republic. In all the steps that Mr Chamberlain has taken since the dangerous state of affairs in Johannesburg, and Dr Jameson's purpose to march thither, were first brought to the notice of the Government, the requirements demanded of us by the Law of Nations have been strictly fulfilled, however repugnant they may have been to the sentiments of our countrymen; and the scrupulous care with which our international obligations have been discharged only makes the gratuitous interference of a foreign Power all the more insulting and irritating to the national sense of honour.

We are being twitted on all sides with the imputation that land-grabbing is the essence of our colonial policy. If any such charge were worth refuting, its disproof would be found in the Transvaal difficulty itself. No nation except Great Britain would have continued to tolerate in the heart of its territory a republic giving constant trouble, dependent

entirely for its prosperity upon its intercourse with ourselves and upon our goodwill, and yet repaying our favours with hatred and placing itself constantly as a barrier in the way of South African progress. Had we been content to leave them to themselves and to the tender mercies of Secocoeni, who, but for our intervention in 1877, would have very likely overrun the whole Transvaal, we should have been spared much trouble and some discomfiture during the last twenty years. We saved the Transvaal Boers on that occasion when there was scarcely a penny in the Treasury at Pretoria, and the Republic was as much bankrupt as any State could be that had no external credit. Our intervention, which was the only alternative which the Boers then had to choose between and destruction, began to be resented as soon as the peril was averted. We were misled as to the real sentiments of the majority of the Boer population, and we, perhaps too hastily, annexed the country. But whether the annexation of the Transvaal was a mistake or not, having once hoisted the British flag in the country we were bound to maintain it there. A flood of English immigration, attended by a large amount of capital, at once began to flow into the Transvaal, relying upon the permanency of British administration, and the equal laws which accompany it. The new and increasing prosperity which was springing up under British rule only stimulated the cupidity of the Boers to get back the country into their own hands. The rebellion of 1880 and the disaster of Majuba Hill were unfortunately not met by Mr Gladstone's Government with the firmness which such a crisis demanded. It was resolved to leave the Boers once more to themselves, in the

hope that under British suzerainty, and with a Resident at Pretoria, they might be able to exercise the privileges of self-government with benefit to the whole of South Africa. But if the Transvaal was hastily annexed, it was abandoned in still greater hurry. The interests of the British settlers were left to be dealt with at the discretion of the Boers. A number of British subjects quitted the Transvaal on that occasion, but there still remained some hundreds who had thrown in their lot with British rule. A grave breach of faith was committed towards them which is now bearing bitter fruit. They had followed the English flag, and when it was withdrawn the English part of the population practically found themselves handed over as helots to the Boer oligarchy; and considering the bad blood between the two races, the position of our countrymen in the Transvaal constituted a standing reproach to Great Britain.

In all our subsequent dealings with the Transvaal, we have taken the interests and feelings of the governing Boers solely into account. We modified the conditions of dependence laid down in the Convention of 1881 by the Convention of London in 1884, which limited our interference to controlling the relations of the Transvaal with all foreign Powers except the Orange Free State—a proviso which implies the continuance of the Queen's suzerainty, more expressly enunciated in the earlier agreement.

The restoration of the Transvaal was speedily followed by the gold discoveries and a rush of emigrants, "Outlanders," who placed the native Boers in a small minority of the population. The Outlanders, both in numbers and in wealth the most important ele-

ment in the Republic,—they had raised the Transvaal revenue in about ten years from £75,000 to £1,750,000,—could scarcely be expected to put up with their position as an inferior body in the State, to be content without any political status, and to pay heavy taxes for the exclusive benefit of the small privileged minority. The primitive patriarchal administration which served the requirements of a small farming community was quite unsuited to the circumstances of such cities as Johannesburg and the large mining population round about it. Complaints were made by the Outlanders, and the denial of all redress afforded their community a well-founded grievance. They sought in vain for adequate protection to property, for a sufficient police, nowhere so indispensable as among a mining population, for an educational system in keeping with the times, for treating the English and Dutch languages on an equal footing, and for a removal of all civil, religious, and race disabilities. The corruption of the Courts, and the irresponsibility of the executive, were also grievances of which the Outlanders complained. The admission to the franchise of the Outlanders, and to a just share in the legislation of the Republic, would have provided the means of satisfying their complaints; but in effect the policy with which the Boer Government has replied to their representations has been to fence in the franchise more tightly than before, and to offer it to the Outlanders in such a restricted measure and under such cumbersome conditions that the concessions offered were purely illusory. The situation was full of strange anomalies. There was a small ruling class, ignorant and prejudiced, and animated solely by ideas of self-interest, opposing an

efficient resistance to a large population of men educated in the principles of freedom and political equality—an anachronistic survival damming back the full flood of modern civilisation. There was the British Government with its influence as over-lord of the Boer Government, and with its sympathies and interests connected with the success of the claims which the Outlanders were making for their natural rights. It was the duty of the Government to prevent the Outlanders from seizing the Boer Republican Government and supplanting it by an administration of their own. It was the duty also of the Government to strive that fair and equal justice might be secured to the English Outlanders in the Transvaal State. Beyond this the Government as a Government could not go. Having renounced all control over the internal policy of the Boer Republic, we could neither prescribe to them a new constitution nor officially support the claims of our countrymen to equal rights. Even the exercise of our influence with the Boer Executive was debarred by the certainty that in their ignorant jealousy the Council at Pretoria would regard our interposition in behalf of the Outlanders' claims as the first step towards bringing the Transvaal again under the British flag. Between the obligations of international law and the narrow jealousy of the governing Boers we were practically excluded from doing anything to avert the crisis which for some time past has been steadily maturing at Johannesburg.

With regard to the Outlanders themselves, the British Government was also placed at a disadvantage. We could fully sympathise with all constitutional efforts to obtain the redress to which they

were so justly entitled, but it was quite clear that we could give them no countenance in a forcible attempt to compass their aims. Had the projected rebellion taken place, we could scarcely have regarded it as civil war. The question of the Queen's suzerainty, though now ignored, would promptly have been insisted upon by the Boers, as well as our responsibility for the conduct of our own part of the Outlander population. We should have been placed in the extremely awkward position of having to suppress an insurrection which possessed much moral justification, and the resultant conflict could not but have had an evil effect upon our future position in South Africa.

Seeing no prospect of assistance from any side, the Outlanders naturally resorted to combination. That Johannesburg has been for months back the seat of both an open and a secret association for overthrowing the Boer Government now appears to be beyond dispute. The Transvaal National Union, though putting forward a very Radical programme, could lay some claim to be acting on the lines of constitutional agitation; and Afrikaners and Dutchmen were among its prominent leaders. But beneath and underlying the open agitation there seems to have been a conspiracy to overthrow the existing Boer Government. Of the real character and extent of this plot the public is still ignorant, but there is every reason to suppose that the catastrophe was precipitated by its means. The Boers seem to have been fully aware all through the month of December that a crisis was at hand, and they were making preparations for meeting it; but they made no representations to the suzerain power, although it was their duty to have done so until it

was too late for the latter to intervene. This circumstance must be taken into account in judging both the case of the Boer Government and that of Dr Jameson and his companions in arms. Early in December the Boers were under arms, and fresh levies were being made, until the condition of Johannesburg became alarming, especially to those most implicated in the agitation. They thought, or professed to think, that a conflict was imminent, in which the lives of the unarmed population of Johannesburg and of women and children would be endangered; and on 28th December a letter, signed by a number of the chief agitating Outlanders, was despatched to Dr Jameson at Mafeking, imploring him to come to their aid in the maintenance of peace. The tone of the letter was very bitter against the Boers—a circumstance which Dr Jameson could scarcely have overlooked; but the appeal was such as no Englishman could have listened to with indifference, even with the consequences of a breach of international law staring him in the face.

"What we have to consider is," the writers say, "what will be the condition of things here in the event of conflict? Thousands of unarmed men, women, and children of our race will be at the mercy of well-armed Boers, while property of enormous value will be in the greatest peril. We cannot contemplate the future without the gravest apprehensions. All feel that we are justified in taking any steps to prevent the shedding of blood and to ensure the protection of our rights. It is under these circumstances that we feel constrained to call upon you to come to our aid. Should a disturbance arise here, the circumstances are so extreme that we cannot but believe that you and the men under you will not fail to come to the rescue of people who will be so situated."

We have some difficulty in this

country in conceiving how powerfully such an appeal must have stirred Jameson and the band of Englishmen assembled with him at Mafeking. Here was a town mostly inhabited by their fellow-countrymen and friends in apparent extremity, and the lives of English women and children in peril. His presence was required to preserve peace, not to fight with the Boers. It was not a time to consider questions of law or policy, but to ride to the rescue of their countrymen and countrywomen in dire peril. And where were obligations of international law sufficient to override the claims of humanity preferred in this letter? After all, Dr Jameson and his friends were merely going to preserve the peace in a town which was under their Queen's suzerainty, and which was in danger of bloodshed. He was invading no hostile territory, he was going on no filibustering raid; he was acting on the invitation of people who, he was told, were in serious peril. Such, we may believe, were the humane and patriotic motives that impelled Dr Jameson to take such a responsible step as to enter the Transvaal in arms. It may be added to this that the obligations of international law are very loosely interpreted and of little force in South Africa, where the Boers themselves have all along shown a most conspicuous example of setting them at defiance. Their raids on Bechuanaland and other British territories, until checked by Sir Charles Warren's mission, were much graver offences than Dr Jameson's ride. Nor can we leave out of sight the painful position in which Dr Jameson would have been placed in the eyes of his countrymen had blood flowed in the streets of Johannesburg while he and his comrades

remained quiescent, held by the strict lines of official duty. Unfortunate as is his present situation, it is enviable compared to what it would have been in such a case.

But while we can recognise many justifications in Jameson's action, there is much in the conduct of the Johannesburgers that cannot be lightly passed over. Almost simultaneously with the despatch of the letter to Jameson, they issued a manifesto which can only be regarded as a declaration of rebellion against the Boer Government. The final judgment on Jameson's conduct will necessarily depend much upon whether or not he was cognisant of this manifesto when he entered Transvaal territory. To come to the assistance of a population at the point of the sword is one thing; to bring aid to an insurrection against a constituted Government is entirely a different matter. The letter calling for Jameson's aid is of quite a different import from the manifesto, and so far as facts have yet been elicited we find no grounds for assuming that he was aware of the real circumstances under which he was called to Johannesburg. Until the Johannesburg leaders succeed in clearing their conduct, the impression must remain that they depended upon Jameson's co-operation for carrying out a rising, that they lured him to Johannesburg upon partial statements of their position, and that when in the end they saw their project prevented they basely abandoned him and his force to an overwhelming majority. Their apathy during the battle of Krugersdorp excited very much the same feeling as Jameson's refusal to answer their piteous appeal would have roused. In both cases the strictly legal obligation was to remain quiescent,

but Jameson's splendid disobedience presents itself in a very different light from the respect which the Johannesburgers evinced for the High Commissioner's proclamation.

How urgent Jameson must have regarded the summons to Johannesburg as being, is shown in the fact that his force neither slept nor refreshed themselves on their ride. His statement to the Boer commandant of Marico, while disclaiming hostile intentions, that he had come to assist the principal residents of the Rand "in their demands for justice and the ordinary rights of every citizen of a civilised State," is decidedly compromising, and it is to be hoped that he will be able to explain the assertion. We make less of his disregard of the High Commissioner's message to desist from his expedition, for Jameson may possibly have considered that the authorities at Cape Town were unable to grasp the critical nature of the situation, and that the preservation of peace in Johannesburg would condone his disobedience. We must remember, also, that a full measure of responsibility and a free hand have always been conceded to British officers, whether under the Crown or the Chartered Company, in critical emergencies. No proof of hostile intentions has yet been adduced, until Jameson found his march arrested by a force of armed Boers near Krugersdorp, twenty-one miles from Johannesburg. We need not go into the details of that encounter, in which, after a gallant and desperate fight against four times their number, Jameson and his men, exhausted by their long ride and want of food and rest, and with their last bullet spent, had to surrender to the Boers. The bravery and endurance with which they attacked the Boers, well covered and holding

an inaccessible position, and the fact that they did not give in until their last round was fired, are circumstances that will go far in the public mind to outweigh any considerations of the illegality of their proceedings. The enterprise was not the less noble and glorious that it had proved tragically unsuccessful.

The very difficult position in which Dr Jameson's action had placed our Government was at once grasped by Mr Chamberlain with the hand of a master statesman. We had to keep our international obligations intact, and at the same time we had to regard the effects which the collision might have upon our South African interests. The course promptly followed by Mr Chamberlain was the open and straightforward one which would leave our action unassailable by any Power or party. He at once caused Dr Jameson's action to be publicly repudiated, and warned all British subjects in the Transvaal against any disturbance of constituted authority; and Sir Hercules Robinson, the High Commissioner, was speedily sent to the scene of action. He also put himself in friendly relations with President Kruger with a view to composing a difficulty in which both Powers were equally interested. On our side the requirements of international law have been fulfilled to the letter by Mr Chamberlain's judicious action. Whether or not the Boer obligations have been as loyally carried out ought to be inquired into. Circumstances point to the fact that the Government of Pretoria were well acquainted with the mischief that was hatching at Johannesburg, and had made ample preparations to meet it, and that they were ready to receive Jameson the moment he crossed the frontier. It was their duty in such circum-

stances to have given the Cape Government due and timely warning of a dangerous movement in which a number of British subjects were concerned, so that our influence might have been exerted in behalf of a peaceful settlement. It also seems as if the Government at Pretoria had politically encouraged matters to come to a crisis with the view of bringing the Outlander agitation to a discreditable termination. If this be the case, their policy has only succeeded too well.

With the interposition of the British Government, and the surrender of Dr Jameson and his men, there seemed to be every prospect of bringing the difficulties that had arisen to a speedy and satisfactory settlement, when the Emperor of Germany's precipitate and gratuitous intervention again plunged the Transvaal question into a still more acute and dangerous crisis than before. We need not further comment upon the Kaiser's impetuous and foolish message to President Kruger. If it had any deeper foundation than the Emperor William's weakness for parading himself in the eyes of Europe, he has already been sufficiently punished by the undignified position in which, upon the briefest reflection, it was found that both he and Germany had been placed by his action. President Kruger received the Kaiser's message with formal gratitude; Mr Chamberlain with a reiteration of the British suzerainty as contained in our adherence to the Convention of 1884. The nation received it in such a spirit of indignation as it will take both time and trouble to remove on the part of the Emperor and his councillors alike, if any of the latter are implicated in his offence. We will not have our Colonial policy "made in Germany," was the

prompt and unanimous answer to the Emperor's interposition. We will not allow the Queen's suzerainty of the Transvaal to be challenged by any foreign Power. We are working for peace, but if the Emperor William wishes war, as well now as any other time. Such was in effect the answer which Great Britain at once returned to the implied threat in the Emperor's message; and the steps that the Government at once proceeded to take showed that it was no idle or unmeaning language.

Credit must be given to President Kruger and the Transvaal Government for having acted with wisdom and moderation in their proceedings after the battle of Krugersdorp. From the character of the Boer population there was reason to apprehend that Jameson and his fellow-prisoners might be summarily dealt with, but Mr Chamberlain's judiciously counselled recommendation to clemency was quite intelligible to President Kruger. Had a hair of Jameson's head been harmed by his captors after he had laid down his arms, all prospect of accommodation would have been cut off. It was, however, quite in order that Jameson should be tried and sentenced to death by the Transvaal authorities; it showed sound wisdom as well as humanity that the President should refuse to carry out the sentence, and determine to hand Jameson over to the British authorities to be tried for the offence he had committed against our neutrality. Nor can complaint be made that his rendition was postponed until Johannesburg was disarmed and the leaders of the agitation arrested. With regard to the position of the latter, our powers are strictly limited. Though the majority may be British subjects, they are clearly amenable to the courts

of the Transvaal for any offences they may have committed against its constitution. A fair and impartial trial is all that we can demand for them, and we cannot even plead on their behalf that their action was justified by the treatment which their demands have received at the hands of the Boer. We can interpose, however, our influence as a friendly and suzerain Power to prevent extreme measures being taken against them in case of their conviction. But there are various considerations that must restrain Mr Chamberlain's disposition to exert himself actively on their behalf. South Africa is the last place in the world where we could wish conspiracy and rebellion against lawfully constituted authority to be minimised or regarded as a venial offence, and the present is not a time that we can justly bring pressure to bear upon the Republican Government.

We fear that for the present an immediate arrangement of the Outlanders' grievances is not to be hoped for. The Johannesburg fiasco must be held to have postponed the full settlement of their claims, at any rate until order and confidence have been completely restored, and we have had time to consider how far our interests will allow us to take the demands of the Outlanders under our protection. The utter breakdown of the leaders of the agitation when they came to the crisis which they themselves had forced on, does not suggest that the transfer of power to them would be an unquestionable benefit to the Transvaal. Neither the mining camp nor the stock exchange are the best training-schools for the exercise of the franchise, and we must admit that President Kruger has some reason on his side in regarding with apprehension a wholesale extension of

political power. We shall have to consider carefully how far it is wise for us to aid British subjects in divesting themselves of their allegiance to the Queen and becoming citizens of a Republic. For our own part, we can have no desire to see a British Republic supplant the Boer one in the administration of the Transvaal. Such an event would have the worst possible effect upon the rule of the Crown in South Africa. We have to face the broad fact that we gave up the Transvaal to be governed as a Republic for the benefit of a class, and that class the Boers. Should they prove unable to administer it, it falls by default to the suzerain Power to determine the future of the country. The prospect of the Outlanders setting up a republic for themselves in South Africa is not one that her Majesty's Government can be expected to encourage.

Yet out of this chaos order may be evolved by such a far-seeing Minister as Mr Chamberlain. It is impossible that the new elements in the Transvaal population can remain excluded from all participation in political power while they continue to be heavily taxed for the benefit of the small governing minority. Such is the lesson that President Kruger and his friends may well draw from the present danger. Wise measures of concession of equal rights and privileges, if not of equal power, are the means by which the Boers can maintain their position as an independent Republic. Continued perseverance in slighting all claims made by the Outlander population can only lead to another, and, it may be, a more carefully matured and more successful rising. When matters have settled down, and the nature of the Outlanders' projects, and of the extent to

which their leaders stand compromised, have been determined, Mr Chamberlain will doubtless feel that, in the interests of British South Africa, he is justified in exerting himself to have the questions between Boers and Outlanders settled to their mutual satisfaction. President Kruger may reassure himself by the consideration that if a Boer Republic in the midst of our South African territory be an eyesore to us, a distinctly British Republic in its place would be a far less agreeable prospect to English eyes.

Whatever difficulties we may have still before us in bringing Transvaal affairs into a position in which they can again be left to the Boers themselves, will arise from the ill-considered intervention of the Emperor William. It is entirely due to him that we have again been compelled to publicly enunciate the fact of the Queen's suzerainty over the country—a fact which, never formally disputed by the Transvaal Government, we have always allowed to remain in the background; and that we shall be compelled to enforce more rigorously than before the provisions of the Convention of 1884 with regard to the Transvaal's intercourse with other European Powers. The game which Dr Leyds has been carrying on in Berlin during the crisis forces upon the attention of Britain the neglect with which, in frequent instances, we have treated this important safeguard. Dr Leyds was not an accredited envoy: he was in Europe ostensibly for health, but he did not scruple to seek to enlist German support, while his official position as Secretary of State at Pretoria gave an official colour to his proceedings. President Kruger is too cautious a man to hazard the existence of his Government by ratifying the pro-

ceedings of his colleague if they should have taken the direction of involving him with British power; but he should be requested to formally disavow a Transvaal official whose presence in Europe is proving a political scandal and a danger to his own Government. No doubt the President is alive to the power that it would place in his hands if he were able to play Germany off against Great Britain, but he is too prudent to engage himself in entanglements which would finally ruin the Boer state. What the German Emperor can find in the Transvaal situation to make him think it becoming to pose as the champion of the Boer race is a political problem. He has no concern either by political treaty or by national ties with the Transvaal Republic. He has no mandate from any quarter to call in question the Queen's supremacy. It is ridiculous to suppose that Britain will submit such a question to his arbitration, or to that of any European Convention, in the most improbable event of any other Power being silly enough to join him with such an object. He may have his jealousies against our Colonial successes in Africa; he may have his grievances against the extension of our South African empire. But he must find a more sufficient cause of quarrel than the Queen's suzerainty in the Transvaal before he will be able to carry Germany with him into active hostility against English power. Upon such a subject Britain will brook no interference, and the present activity of our dockyards and arsenals is quite a sufficient intimation of the temper in which the Government and the country view his recent ebullition. Next to America, Germany is the last Power with which we could wish to be involved in unfriendly relations, but we can accept neither her dic-

tation nor her interposition in the territories of Greater Britain; and there is no harm in wishing that her peace rested in more responsible hands than those of her present untried ruler, who seems determined to dissipate the European influence which his grandfather and father, with the aid of the wisest statesmen, had succeeded in establishing at Berlin.

The Chartered Company stands compromised by Dr Jameson's action, and it has invited an investigation into its conduct which will be undertaken by the Government. Pending this inquiry, it is proper that no judgment should be passed. It will, however, be a misfortune to the empire should the Government discover grounds for abolishing, or even weakening, an organisation that has done so much for the extension of British power in South Africa, and is still capable of contributing greatly to the development of the new provinces. Mr Chamberlain has intimated that steps will be taken to "make it impossible for such attempts as Jameson's raid" to be planned or executed in future, a statement which seems to imply that the powers of the Chartered Company will at least be more strictly circumscribed. As for Mr Cecil Rhodes, who has hitherto been the soul of the Company, and who, both as its managing director in South Africa and as Premier of the Cape Colony, has fallen under suspicion in connection with the Transvaal outbreak, we can only express a hope that the honour of a man who has done such signal service to the empire may come unblemished out of the inquiry. We can wait for Mr Rhodes's explanations; but the fact that he has first broken silence in an American newspaper by a partisan pronouncement in

favour of the Outlanders is an injudicious if not an unbecoming venture for one in his present position.

In the meantime, we must be content to abide by the terms of President Kruger's proclamation of 10th January, and to reciprocate the conciliatory and pliant spirit which it expresses. The concession which he indicates of a mayor and a municipality to Johannesburg is but a small instalment of the Outlanders' demands, but it will doubtless be accepted as the preliminary to more sweeping reforms. Mr Chamberlain is not likely to put any pressure upon the President and Transvaal Government, except by way of suggesting such measures as may conduce to the greater security of the State. But the Outlanders may rest assured that their disabilities, now brought so forcibly home to us, will not be again neglected by Great Britain, and that the influence of the Government will be cast in favour of all their reasonable demands when these are being prosecuted by lawful means. Until the case of the prisoners at Pretoria is decided, friction must exist; but we trust that the President's appeal to "make it possible for the Government to appear before the Volksraad with the motto, 'Forget and forgive,'" will be respectfully listened to by the whole Transvaal population.

While the energies of our Government became suddenly engrossed in Transvaal affairs, and the danger that might arise from gratuitous interference by Germany in the course of events there, Lord Salisbury has all the time had to keep his eye steadily bent upon the course which the President of the United States has been pursuing with regard to our dispute with the Venezuelan Government. When President Cleveland's de-

termination to apply the Monroe doctrine to our territorial claims in Venezuela, and to put before the British Government what was practically the alternative of arbitration or war, was announced to Congress, both sides of the Atlantic stood aghast with incredulity. What was implied in the menace was felt more severely by the Americans than by ourselves. A partial warlike enthusiasm which naturally enough was kindled by the first sound of the President's challenge, quickly gave place to more rational considerations, and America began to ask herself what Venezuela was, and what claims she had on the United States, that her Government should plunge into war with Great Britain on behalf of the South American Republic's uncertain pretensions. The shock to British sentiments was not less acute, but we had our advantage in the indefeasible position which our Venezuelan case occupied in the eyes of the political world, and the general conviction that President Cleveland's high-handed interposition was unwarranted and unprovoked. Even in the event of the President's main object having been to excite electoral enthusiasm, and to secure for himself a third term of office, his conduct has been in every respect condemnable from an international point of view, and as such it must be regarded by the great majority of his own fellow-citizens. Great Britain, consistently with her own dignity, cannot allow the issues of her peace or war to be regarded as a pawn in party politics, even by a Power so closely connected with ourselves as is America. Whatever President Cleveland's message may mean to the American elector, it can have but one import to a British Ministry. We cannot have our policy imported from America, any more than we will have it

made in Germany. But the anxieties of the American people find a ready and generous response in this country. The horror with which a fratricidal war with England is regarded by the better part of the American people is fully reciprocated in this country, and our feelings are not less concerned than their own in seeking to avert a struggle brought about by the recklessness of their chief magistrate.

The real difficulty lies in providing for President Cleveland a means of escape from the false position in which he has placed himself and his country. He has already cast around him for means of securing a retreat which would be much more creditable to himself than any heroic efforts to vindicate his consistency. Lord Salisbury, we are sure, will throw no obstacles in his way. Neither the British lion nor the American eagle need be imported into the controversy. Our Government will not precipitate a crisis, but will give America ample time to feel her way out of her difficulties. Thanks to the strong position in which Lord Salisbury has placed the Venezuelan question, we can stand on guard and watch the course of events. The chief danger is not at Washington but at the Caracas, where President Cleveland's attitude may encourage the Venezuelans in some act of aggression which would compel us at once to interpose. The fact that he was championing one of the most tumultuous and irresponsible republics of South America seems, like many other not less serious considerations, to have entirely escaped the President's mind when he was composing his eventful message to Congress.

The strong legal position which our Government holds in the Venezuelan controversy has also its imperative obligatory duties.

We may give America time to extricate herself from her position,—we shall even look on with sympathy at the success of any diplomatic devices which she may employ to cover her retreat. But unless Venezuela of herself chooses to resume diplomatic negotiations and discuss an arrangement with Britain, we cannot recede a step from our present position. If the publication of the papers showing the part that Britain has taken in her dealings with the Venezuelan Government is likely to smooth the ruffled feelings of the two Republics, we can see no reason why they should not be laid before Parliament as soon as possible; and if President Cleveland should think of exchanging his attitude of umpire for that of a friendly intermediary, the incidents that have occurred will not prevent Lord Salisbury from cordially welcoming and recognising his intervention in that capacity.

The despatches between England and America, published in the 'London Gazette' of December 19, have already, however, placed before the public the whole case as between ourselves and Venezuela, as well as our repudiation of America's claim for the right of authoritative intervention. No more powerful State paper has ever been penned than Lord Salisbury's despatch vindicating British interests on the American continent from the operation of the Monroe doctrine. The Monroe doctrine, at the most, is merely a pious belief among certain sections of American politicians, but no part of the American constitution, and never hitherto recognised by other Powers; and the idea of bringing it to bear upon a country so remote from the United States as British Guiana can only be characterised as a wild dream. Mr Olney's contention that "distance

and 3000 miles of intervening ocean make any permanent political union between a European and an American State unnatural and inexpedient," is reduced to its essential absurdity by Lord Salisbury's demonstration that "the necessary meaning of these words is that the union between Great Britain and Canada; between Great Britain and Jamaica and Trinidad; between Great Britain and British Honduras or British Guiana, are 'inexpedient and unnatural.'" The facts of these unions are antecedent to the Monroe doctrine, and Britain can never consent to have them subjected to its incidence. The Monroe doctrine is, no doubt, a useful principle for the American Government to have for falling back upon in the case of territorial changes in the vicinity of the United States, or in the introduction of foreign authority into the northern half of America, but it cannot be extended over old established European States in the Western hemisphere. Not merely Britain, but France, Holland, Spain, and Denmark must decline to recognise the doctrine. The precedent which Mr Olney cites in the case of the French occupation of Mexico has no bearing upon our controversy with Venezuela, any more than the present case of Cuba, in which the American attitude can with difficulty be justified by international law.

The boundary debate between British Guiana and Venezuela is of very old standing; and, as Great Britain has always stood upon an irreducible minimum of her claims and has been willing to waive large tracts to which she can make out a legal right, the blame rests with the Venezuelans themselves that the matter has not been settled long ago. Sir Robert Schomburgk's boundary was fixed well within territory that indefeasibly

belonged to Britain; and was, as Lord Salisbury has pointed out, "a great reduction of the boundary claimed by Great Britain as a matter of right, and its proposal originated in a desire to come to a speedy and friendly arrangement with a weaker Power with whom Great Britain was at the time, and desired to remain, in cordial relations." Repeated efforts have failed to bring the Venezuelans to the acceptance and definite demarcation of a frontier. From the time of Schomburgk's alignment down to the seizure of the dictatorship by Guzman Blanco in 1870, a period of thirty years, Venezuela was distracted by its internal dissensions and conflicts between the "Blues" and "Yellows," and there was no permanent or responsible Government to negotiate with. The original British claims remained accordingly intact, and the Schomburgk line became the working frontier of our colony, though not by any means its territorial limit. An offer by Lord Aberdeen in 1844 to make some concessions on the Schomburgk line, and to accept another frontier known as the Morocco line, was never noticed by the Venezuelans, and six years after it was formally withdrawn on their default. In 1877 the question was raised by Don Guzman Blanco, the Venezuelan dictator, by a demand which, as Lord Salisbury tells us, involved the surrender of a province now inhabited by 40,000 British subjects. Our Government then attempted to bring about an understanding based on mutual concessions, and the Venezuelans next asked for the Morocco boundary, which they had not accepted forty years before, and which they had been notified was no longer in their offer. British Guiana had meantime been settled beyond the Morocco line, and our Government

could not break faith with our subjects by handing them over to Venezuela. Again considerable concessions were offered by her Majesty's Government on the Schomburgk boundary, and again the Venezuelans gave us no answer. Since 1881 we have been offering concessions to Venezuela, which the Republic has altogether ignored; and, though the Schomburgk line was proclaimed "the irreducible boundary of British Guiana without prejudice to our rights to territory lying outside it," we have repeatedly given the Republic to understand that we are ready to make material concessions for the sake of a definite and permanent boundary. Venezuela has all along trifled with our offers, and shirked a definite settlement. Every attempt that we have made to bring her to negotiate has been evaded, though we have consistently held out to her settlements in a liberal and friendly spirit. We have offered her arbitration upon large tracts of territory which, as Lord Salisbury says, "from their auriferous nature, are known to be of almost untold value." But the grasping spirit of the Venezuelans will have all or none,—the whole area which they claim upon the strength of the Spanish pretensions of last century. Of the soundness of our own case, the Government is well satisfied from the researches which it has made in the archives of Holland and Spain, and the expected publication of these will doubtless remove the last pretext America can put forward for intervening in the matter.

We have no doubt that by this time the American Government is fully satisfied that the Venezuelan claims are not a subject upon which it can creditably pledge the peace of the United States. It has already suffered severely from the Presi-

dent's rash Message. A grave commercial panic was its immediate result, and great losses in all descriptions of American securities. Prompt expression was given to the feeling of insecurity with which the mercantile classes of the States had been impressed, and the New York Chamber of Commerce passed a strongly worded censure on the President's conduct in involving the peace of the United States in a dispute in which America had no real stake at issue. The gravity of the situation was still further brought home to the Americans by the financial measures, including a Tariff Bill, for which the President had to ask the consideration of Congress. The outcome of all this is the decided preponderance of a peace feeling among the influential majority of the American citizens which, compared with the importance of the anti-English section who still maintain fitful clamours for war, indicates that as a whole the American nation will not readily allow itself to be drawn into war for the sake of vindicating the President's blunder. We already see in various forms that President Cleveland is casting about him for means of removing the friction which his action has caused between the two countries. The request of the American Government that our representatives in South Africa will watch over the interests of the Americans who are among the Johannesburg prisoners will be gladly complied with, and the request hailed as an approach to the previous state of cordiality, in which each nation took a pleasure in doing good offices for the other. But the President is still hampered by the natural outcome of his own imprudence. In fanning such ill feelings as exist among Americans against this country, President Cleveland has kindled a fire which may perhaps devour himself. His

own political prospects have been seriously compromised, however matters eventually turn out. The Boundary Commission, which he probably regarded as his chief means of providing an honourable method for washing his hands of the Venezuelan business, now exists as the chief obstacle in the way of an international understanding. With the Commission and its proceedings we have nothing to do, and we shall take no notice of its finding, whether favourable to ourselves or the reverse. What concerns us most deeply of all is that the Commission should not protract its labours until the Venezuelan controversy, with its grave issues to both countries, shall be involved in the coming electoral campaign for the Presidency. If the question is to be put before the State electors, and treated as party political capital, the prospect will be a very serious one, and one that would in all probability interfere with Lord Salisbury's wish to allow the Americans time to feel their way out of the difficulty.

The public will not be surprised if, after Parliament meets and Ministerial explanations have been made, it discovers that the most serious of the foreign problems with which we have to deal is that which still hangs upon the distracted state of the Eastern question. Since Lord Salisbury spoke at Brighton on this subject in November, we have had little light thrown upon the views which our Government takes of the increasing complexities that beset any attempt to restore the credit of the Porte and Ottoman authority in the provinces. Lord Salisbury then made known the substance of the Sultan's letter to the Queen, pledging himself that he would see the necessary reforms

put in force; and in consequence time has been allowed his Majesty to set about the fulfilment of his promise. But in the interval no signs have been discerned of amendment, either at the Porte or in the provinces. There is an increasing feeling of hopelessness, in which our Government appears to have shared from an early stage in the diplomatic interference, that no good results were to be hoped for from the present Sultan and his ever-changing staff of advisers. The delay interposed in the request of the Powers for the protection of additional gunboats in the Bosphorus, the futile character of all attempts at reconciliation emanating from the Palace, and the further excesses wrought by the Turkish troops in the provinces,—all point to an early period when the patience of the Powers will be exhausted. What will be the effect of her Majesty's letter to the Sultan, which has not been sent until ample time had been given him for initiating his promised reforms, remains to be seen. The Powers will not be able to long postpone the adoption of an effective policy. Russia has all along shown herself in favour of coercing the Porte, and of receiving a mandate to occupy Armenia. Lord Salisbury, on the other hand, while prepared to support drastic changes at the seat of Government, will strenuously support the authority of a central government and the integrity of the Ottoman Empire. The great burden of the crisis at Constantinople has been imposed upon Great Britain, without, however, the acquiescent assistance which we had a right to expect from the other Powers. It is much that we have hitherto been able to maintain the European concert; it will be still more if we can continue to carry

it with us in putting an end to a situation that has clearly become untenable.

England has it well in her power, if common-sense counsels could prevail over diplomatic jealousies, to restore order in the Turkish empire, and place the Porte in a position of security in which it would be able to promulgate and initiate those general reforms that can alone preserve it from revolution. The Turkish provincial governments are hopelessly corrupt and inefficient: they have no desire, nor can they be trusted, to carry out equitable and responsible government. Any limitation of their powers that would make officials more strictly accountable for the use of these to the central Government would only be provocative of more disturbance. In these circumstances the question arises, Why not introduce into the service of the Porte trained and reliable officials, to compose the disorders of the disturbed provinces and bring in an administration of equal justice, irrespective of races and creeds? In our Indian empire we have numbers of educated Muhammadans, who might temporarily be employed in the Sultan's service with the utmost advantage to both the Government and the country. We believe a sufficient number of well-trained Mussulman officers could be spared from the Uncovenanted service of India for temporary duty in the Turkish empire. The employment of them would be a source of confidence to Europe, and ought to be satisfactory to the Sultan himself,

as he could scarcely have the same scruples about accepting the services of his co-religionists as he might entertain against the employment of European Christian subjects of the other Powers. The question whether Indian troops might not well take the place for a time of the savage hordes whose barbarities are disgracing Europe and the age, in reducing the disturbed Asiatic provinces to order, is a more delicate question, and yet it is one that well deserves to be considered, if the Powers would only give Britain that credit for singleness of purpose which she is labouring so hard to deserve.

Turn where we may, we meet with difficulties and complications. The air is heavily charged with political electricity, and no one can predict when or where the thunder-cloud is to burst. But the national spirit was never more strong and collected. In all our various controversies we have taken up a firm ground on the principles of public law. We seek peace with all the other Powers; but we will allow none to interfere with our rights or to infringe our dignity. Our reply to a menace is at once to stand on guard. We have full confidence in our Government's wisdom and moderation, and that no quarrel to which the country may be committed will be an unworthy one. The Opposition has, to its honour, shown during the last few weeks that it ranks patriotism before party. Lord Salisbury has the whole nation behind him. He will seek peace, but he will also see that the country is not to be taken unprepared.

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THE HEIRS OF KELLIE. AN EPISODE OF FAMILY HISTORY.

CHAPTER I.

SIR WALTER OLIPHANT of Kellie in Fife was a man who had grown old amid many perturbations of the State and of the house. In Mary's stormy and troubled day he had been, as many were, not so certain in his beliefs, either political or religious, as a person of so much consequence in his county ought to have been. He had been the Queen's man, and he had been the King's man, without, however, being either a time-server or a turncoat. He was one of those who would have given his life to prove his Queen's innocence, but who all the time could not but feel that this would be a poor argument, and no evidence at all, against the cold chill of doubt that lingered all the time even in his own heart. And his reason

was convinced of the advantages of the English alliance, and that everything must be risked rather than King James's heirship, notwithstanding the strong revolt in his heart against that which was so likely to follow, the abandonment of Scotland, and ebbing away of her dearly bought glory and the pride of her independence, second to none. But all the active struggles of life had died away from him when he sate in his old hall, in the dreary years after the Court had gone away to London, drawing so many with it; and the change had stricken to the heart of Scotland, as wise men had known it would, although all the country had cheered and shouted when their king assumed the English crown, as if it had been by his

prowess and for their greatness that he had won that other kingdom. The land was subdued and troubled in these days, yet did not venture to complain; for had not they desired that which had come to pass? And the Kirk was troubled and uncertain too, alarmed by threatenings of interference, though no great thing had yet been attempted, and the ministers still had dominion more or less, and, though many things were tolerated that had been condemned, still guided most things their own way.

But all the affairs of the world had grown dim to Sir Walter Oliphant, sitting in his little warm chamber—the room of panelled and carved oak, which opened from the hall of Kellie Castle, as all the chief rooms did and do to this day, without any chill of corridors or passages, but one room out of another, after the ancient fashion. He sat by his fire, and his mind was full of thoughts. He was an old man, but not so old in years as in condition. His life, which had been a stirring one, was far off from him, as if it had been a dream. There were times when it came up into his mind like a tale that had been told, with which he had little to do—the time when he was stout and strong, and rode out to feast and to fight, and came back to hear the shouts and the sports of his boys making the rafters ring. He thought of all these things sometimes vaguely, as of things that had been; but at present his occupation was chiefly to keep himself warm, and to think who should be the heir of his Castle and his lands when he should be carried for the last time down the winding stair. He was not much concerned about that, any more than he was concerned

for all that had happened to him in the past: but the thought of who should have Kellie after him was still real in his mind. That the natural heirs were gone had caused him bitter sorrow in his day; but even that had grown far away and dim to him, and all his life had shrunk into the routine of getting up from his bed and going back to it—both tiresome processes—and swallowing the food that had no taste, and sitting by the fire that had so little warmth. Only this one thing held him, the great care of making up his mind who was to be the heir of Kellie in the days when he should be there no more.

It was not that he was without kin or heirs at law. There was one even at his own hearthstone who might well have ended all difficulties, being its natural inheritor. Though Sir Walter was an old man, he had a sister who was little more than a girl, though that is a strange thing to think of. His father had lived long, and had made a foolish marriage in his old age, and left behind him a child much younger than his grandsons, and who was like a grandchild to her brother. She had grown up in the house, the plaything of everybody, her right to her home never doubted, yet without any position in it. When the others disappeared Jean remained, and it might be that the father bereaved felt in the bottom of his heart some grudge that she of whom no account was made should continue when the loftier heads were laid low. But if this was in his heart he did not betray it. She grew and blossomed out, and came to her full height, which was not small, and was now of an age to be considered the lady of the house. And no doubt, the old knight might easily have given her

to a fitting wooer, and thus found himself an heir among the best blood of Fife; but of this he never thought, nor of Jean his little sister as in any sense his successor. It angered him greatly when Master Melville of Carnbee kirk and parish took it upon him to speak a word to this effect. "Her, the heiress!" cried the old knight, with a roar in his throat like a wounded lion. And he would not speak to Master Melville again for many a day.

"And wha but her should be the heir?" said Mistress Marjory, the old nurse, who had long been the housekeeper at Kellie, and to whom Jean was as the light of her eyes. "Waes me for all the bonnie lads that are away! and no an Oliphant left to keep up the honour of the old house. But though she's but a lass she has the blood as well as any one, knight or lord, that ever owned the name. And wherefore should she not get a good man and raise up the race?"

"If she had a good man the morn the race she would raise up would be for his house and no hers," said Neil Morison, who was the head of the other section of the household, and in most things opposed to Mistress Marjory. He gave forth a dry laugh, as was his wont, and added, "For all so grand as ye are, the name never comes from the side of the distaff. That's aye something to our side."

"There's times," said the housekeeper, "when nae less a thing than a crown comes from that side—as is well kent in poor auld Scotland this day."

"Ye may say that," said Neil, forced into sudden sympathy, "and if we had vanquished thae English loons by our swords and our spears, as it is written in Scripture, it would hae been the better way."

"Oh, hold your tongue with

your spears and your swords! It would set ye better, Maister Morison, to do what you can with our auld knight and keep sore injustice out of his head—for who should have the lands after him but his ain flesh and blood?"

"It would never do, it would never do," cried Neil. "A lass! that couldna keep her ain heid, and muckle less the old Oliphant lands—that are not what they used to be, lack-a-day, whoever was the heir."

"What are they colloquing about, the two great rulers of the house," said a young voice, bursting in as its owner did, with a sudden gush of fresh air and the fragrance of the outdoor world, "putting each other in mind of the greatness of the Oliphants, now that it's like the Flowers of the Forest, and a' wede away."

"Mistress Jean! and a' in a confusion, your hair about your haffits, and the lace torn off your riding-coat! What has happened to you? Will ye never mind what a' the house tells you, that it sets you not, a lady like you, to ride a powney about the roads like a farmer's lass."

"Or maybe worse things than that," said Neil, who had risen hurriedly to his feet on the young lady's entrance, and shot this Parthian arrow at her as he went away.

"I will shoot that auld carle some day if he looks at me so," she cried, with a sudden gleam of anger, then laughed and clapped her hands, "with my bow and arrows," she added, merrily. "We'll put him against the castle wall, and pin him to't like that bonny saint in the old picture. What's happened, said she? A great deal has happened. I have had a grand adventure, Marjory, simple as I sit here."

"Oh, bairn, bairn!" cried the housekeeper, "you'll just break my heart."

"It's been broken so often, and aye mended again," said the girl. "Wait till I tell you. I was rattling along on the Pittenweem road, my pony and me, very well pleased with the fine day, and just singing to ourselves, for it was too sunny to keep silence; when lo! I was aware of a horse's hoofs coming pelting after me. I thought what you said, never to mind, but just keep the road quietly and pay no attention. I would not even give a look over my shoulder to see if it was one of the Anstruthers or Roland Dishington, till I came to a corner and gave a glint. And it was a muckle trooper on a muckle grey horse, not canny to see, and no another soul within sight."

"Lord bless my soul! ane of the disbanded Greys!" cried Marjory, lifting up her hands and eyes. "Oh, lassie, lassie! will ye never learn?"

"My heart was in my mouth," said Jean, whose eyes were dancing, however, with excitement and triumph, "but I had to keep up my courage. I gave the pony just a touch to speed her on—and you know she cannot thole even a touch, she has such a spirit. And then there came a muckle voice, as muckle as the man, calling to me, Hey, my bonnie lass! and hey, my bonnie bird! The cannailye! to use such words to me!"

Jean's eyes shone with a momentary gleam of rage and shame. "It is maybe my fault," she said, "as ye are always telling me, to ride alone; but who would I get to come behind? No Maister Morison, the major-domo, nor Jamie Webster, that is everybody's man, nor Jaicque the groom.

No, no; there's nobody to follow Jean: so I must either bide in the house or ride my lane."

"My darlin'! and what did he do?"

"Oh, no harm," cried the girl, laughing, "since here I am, and none the worse but for the lace on my cape, that he gave a snatch at as he came up thundering, till I thought it was a real charge of cavalry, and I would be ridden down."

"Lassie! and how did ye escape? For gude sake dinna keep me in my trouble."

"There is no need for trouble," said Jean, "since here you see me: though I allow," she added, with a pleasure in working upon the old lady's fears, "that a minute longer and I cannot tell what I would have done; for he had gripped my cape in his hand, though the pony was just flying, and the muckle grey horse thundering, and my heart bursting out of my throat with fright and fury." She paused, half from the keenness of the recollection and half maliciously, to pile up the agony.

"And then? and then?"

"Then?" said Jean, looking innocently into her old nurse's face. "Why, then! there was just nothing more."

"Oh, bairn! you are enough to drive ten women out of their senses."

"Well," said Jean, "I will admit there were causes for it. But just at that moment there came another galloping, just as muckle a horse and as muckle a man, on the other side. And my man he dropped hold of my cape, and tore the lace off it with his glove, as you see. And the pony, she just set her feet to the ground as if she were riding a race, and the new man and my man they faced each other. I'm thinking

nothing happened. I saw with that eye I have in the back of my head that they rode up to each other awfu' civil, like two towers; and then the trooper he took the turn to St Monance, and me I flew up the Carnbee road, and the grand adventure was done. You can see I'm not a printhe worse, except my riding-cape, and Kirsten must just sew on the lace again."

"And that was a'!" cried Mistress Marjory, relieved, but at the same time a little disappointed to hear no more.

"All! was it not enough?" said Jean; "would you have had me assaulted on the king's highway, and put in peril of my purse, that has nothing in it, or maybe of my life, which has not very much——" Jean made a pause, and then, looking up demurely, she said in very quiet tones, "No; it was not all."

"Oh, my hinny,—you just play upon me as if I were a fiddle."

"You are much more like a harpsichord," said Jean, contemplating the housekeeper's ample person reflectively. "Yon man after he had dispersed the trooper never came rushing up as Roland Dishington or one of the Ansters would have done, but just rode steady behind as if he had been my servant." The word has or had two meanings, and probably the second of these flashed over her memory, for she made an almost imperceptible pause and reddened. "I was still a little feared: and what did I do but head the pony for yon house you know, of Over-Kellie, where you never would let me go——"

"And then?" cried Mrs Marjory again, breathless.

"Well, they came fleeing out, and he, he came riding in. And it was who would be the most concerned, and was I hurt and was I frightened, and would I bide

and rest? The Liddy—or is she the Gudewife?—for I could not tell——"

"Some calls her the one and some the other," said Marjory, shortly. "Never you mind. You'll be telling me now the man that came up and—saved ye was——"

"That is just it," said Jean, "and if you'll tell nobody, Marjory, I'll just whisper in your ear—he's a bonnie lad."

"Mistress Jean!" cried the housekeeper in consternation.

"Well! say he's just a country fellow, and no grand cock to his hat, nor lace on his coat: I am not saying he's a grand gentleman. But I have a pair of sharp eyes in my head,—you are always saying that,—and I cannot but see what's set before them. He is a bonnie lad; and that is just as true as all the rest."

"What do you call a' the rest?"

"You know as well as I do; or maybe you know better," said Jean, with a little indignation; "because he is Peter Oliphant, and because he is the next of kin, that's not to say that he is not a bonnie lad!"

"It might be a good reason, Mistress Jean, for you kenning naething about him, and no going out of your way to make acquaintance with him——"

"Me go out of my way to make acquaintance with him! Neither him nor any man, if it were a prince or a king! It was he that came out of his way to protect a lass he knew nothing of when he saw she was in need. Maybe you would have thought it better had he left me to the trooper?" said the girl, with much indignation.

"Ob, no that, no that," said the old woman; "but it would have been better you had not put yourself in the way of wanting pro-

tection, my bonnie leddy—no from him nor from any man!" she said.

"You forget who you are speaking to," cried Mistress Jean, with quick anger, flinging away. But

she came back next minute to fling her arms round her old nurse's neck. "And that's true," she said; "I was just thinking so myself."

CHAPTER II.

While this was going on, Sir Walter was sitting in his warm panelled chamber, pondering by the side of the fire. His old Castle, which was not one of the famous strongholds of the time, but yet an ancient house dating far back into the mist of ages, and standing four-square to all the winds that blew, a house that time could scarcely wear more than the rocks, would soon be a desolate and masterless house. Since the days of Bruce the Oliphants had been there, and the first lord of Kellie had good King Robert's blood in his veins. But now there was no one to come after him in the old home of his race. The gloom of that consciousness had settled down upon his mind, and filled him with an immense and indescribable darkness in which he went tottering, seeking for something to replace what was lost, though by moments he was not very clear as to what it was that was lost, which made it necessary for him to grope in the dark and seek that substitute. And his thoughts were very slow, wandering, and confused, though they always came back with unbroken persistency to the one point. Who should have Kellie after him? Who would replace the heirs who were no more? This had been the preoccupation of many years; it almost seemed as if all his life he had been thinking of it. His own active days had vanished away, and all the adventures and troubles that had filled his house with rejoicing and with wailing. Sometimes while

he sat musing on that one sole question he would be surprised by a recollection of himself, as in the days when he rode in Queen Mary's train, or those in which he hung about the ante-chambers at St James's, half proud to feel himself one of the new masters there, half furious to see the dark looks which the Southern lords threw upon King James's train. Was that himself? or one of the former Oliphants who held a larger train at Kellie? or perhaps one of the young ones—the lads, the—, those who ought to have been here to receive Kellie from his hands. Their faces would sometimes flash out from his memory too. Who were they, old heirs of Kellie slain in the wars, or lost in the wildering world, never coming back to claim their heritage? And who was to have it now? Who would keep it safe, and guard all its rights and keep up the auld name? On this subject his thoughts would clear, his mind retained its force. It was the one clear point in the misty universe of dreams that surrounded the old man.

Almost his only visitors were the clergymen of the two neighbouring parishes, each of which claimed Kellie Castle as part of its own. He retained enough of his natural keenness to perceive that each of them took a different side in this great question, and sometimes to play upon their contradictions with something of the pleasure which the quarrels of priests and women between them-

selves so often afford to a man of the world. The difference between them gave him a vague amusement, or something at least as like amusement as he was capable of. Master Melville of Carnbee was a Reformation minister who had known John Knox, and who, though of a much milder temper, was yet very strong as to his duty of speaking in season and out of season, and letting no man avoid or mistake his duty without full warning of it; but Sir John Low at Pittenweem was no better than a mass priest the country folk said, and loved the great, and to speak smooth things, flattering the old laird and supporting him in taking his own way. Sir Walter listened to what they said on both sides, but he was little moved by their arguments. What he was really doing while he seemed to be listening was slowly settling upon his own plans, and deciding for himself while they talked, which neither of them was at all unwilling to do. It was Mr Melville who was his visitor the day after the incident in the last chapter, a grave man of gentle manners, with a black velvet cap upon a bald head.

"What are ye saying?" said Sir Walter. "Reason gude—ay, I've reason gude for all I say to you. It's no fit that an auld race should die out of the land."

"And yet," said the other, in the heat of argument, "if it's so ordained, it's ill striving with the Will aboon. But ye have heirs in plenty at your hand, and little danger of your name. How often must I be telling ye, Sir Walter Oliphant, there is your ain father's daughter, your ain flesh and blood, the one that has the best right? Where would ye go furdur than your ain ingleside? Who could

be so near to you? and young and likely and one to raise up heirs—always if it be the Almichty's will——"

"Who's that?" said the old knight. "Jean! a bit lassie! how often have I tellt you, minister! just as often as you have tellt me. What would I do with a lassie in my seat, that could neither keep the house nor keep her head, a thing with neither might nor right? Na! that will not do for me."

"She would get a man," said Mr Melville.

"Ay, she would get a man! little doubt of that: and my auld lands would be sweepit up into lands that march with mine, and there would be an Anster of Kellie, or a Dishington, or a Lindsay, or the Lord knows what. No! if I have said it once I have said it a hundred times, nae lass shall reign and rule in my auld house."

"Well-a-well, well-a-well! if ye say so," said the minister, "I have no certain teaching about the heirship of a woman, though the daughters of Zelophehad had a portion with their brethren, as we read in the Book of Numbers; but I would not force the word of the Lord, and that might be a special case. But ye know well, Sir Walter, as well as I do, that failing her, there's one of your blood no far from your door that is as weel capable of keeping his ain house and his ain head as Arthur and a' his knights. And that is Peter Oliphant of Over-Kellie——"

"Pah!" the old man spat vehemently into the smouldering fire. "I will have none of him—a country clown—a callant from the plough. And what was his father but a clown before him, with no more spirit of a gentleman than Neil, my man?"

"Neil," said the minister, "is a decent man now, whatever he may have been; but would pocket a crown-piece and hold his tongue if any grand gallant had need of him: whereas your cousin of Over-Kellie, Sir Walter——"

"Cousin! a hundred times removed!"

"Is it you I hear shaming your own blood?" said the other. "Me, I am maybe a hundred times, as you say, or more, removed from the head of my name; but I have yet to learn," the minister added, raising his head, "that the strain of the younger is less pure than the strain of the elder when it flows in an unbroken and lawful line."

"I ken, and we all ken," said Sir Walter, subdued, "minister, that there's no better name in Fife——"

"I am standing upon no such vanities," said Melville. "Your cousin has neither been at the College nor at the Court, Sir Walter, and maybe as well for him in these evil days; but he's a handy man at his weapons, and a lad that kens his own mind. There's no man in the parish better kent or better liked, or more a man of his word. I ken but little of my Lord Oliphant, or of his house; but well I wot there is not a better in it than Pate, or one that can master him, or daunt him, among the best of his name."

"Ye mean the lad to wed one of your lasses, that you are so hot upon him," Sir Walter said.

"I ken well," said Melville, "what lass I want him to wed; but she is none of mine. Will you see the young man, Sir Walter, and judge for yourself? I will bring him to you in my hand, for he has always been a good lad to his minister; though he would not set foot over your door-stane for other motives."

"And wherefore," cried Sir Walter, "would this farmer-lad no set foot over my door-stane?"

"For an evil reason," said the minister; "for pride, and a high head that would not stoop before any man but the king."

"Ha! ha!" cried the old knight; "bring me this clown with his high head that would not stoop under the door of Kellie Castle. Bigger men than him have entered at that door—ay, and stooped too, and even bitten the dust before them that owned it. He's then a deevil of pride and conceit, this yeoman lad of yours?"

"Ye are right, and again right, Sir Walter," said the minister, gravely, "when you say that pride, the pride that you, and even myself, that should ken better, take in the vanity of a name—is a devilish thing."

"If that were all!" Sir Walter said, with a snap of his thumb and finger, which failed and gave no sound. He paused, and his countenance grew grave as he observed this, looking with a half piteous surprise at his own large feeble hand. "I canna even snap my thoom," he said under his breath. Then with a feeble wave of that hand to his companion, he added, "If it's to be done, lose no time."

This was the warrant upon which the minister brought Peter Oliphant to Kellie Castle. He had as much trouble with the young man as he had with the old. The house of Over-Kellie was still excited by the flying visit of Mistress Jean when the minister reached it; and the Leddy, or the Gudewife—for Marjory said truly that she was called sometimes one and sometimes the other, according to the courtesy or indifference of her rare

visitors—could not be persuaded that the extraordinary mission of the minister had not something to do with that exciting incident. The Mistress felt that her Peter was called to the Castle to receive the hand of the Princess, who must have found time enough in the ten minutes of her stay to fall in love with him; and that this event at once and for ever established his claims as heir-at-law, and made Kellie Castle his. The young man naturally was more hard to be convinced; but he too was excited, and not in perfect command of his faculties. If Jean had discovered that he was a bonnie lad, he had still better means of discovering that she was fair enough to dream of; and though this encounter had made her first aware of him, it was by no means the first time that her humble cousin had seen the young lady of Kellie. And, in the glow of pride with which he remembered, though no such claim had ever been acknowledged, that he was the undoubted next of kin, there was, perhaps, something of a more generous fervour, a warm and noble sentiment towards the friendless girl to whom the head of the house, as all the countryside knew, was little more gentle than towards himself. When Sir Walter died, it was he who would be the nearest in blood to her to defend her rights or herself. The Lord Oliphant might be the head of the name: but he was a man who loved gear, and was secretly operating, as all the countryside believed, to draw the lands of Kellie and the old Castle to himself.

It was therefore with no small exaltation of mind that Peter Oliphant flung his bonnet upon his head, notwithstanding his mother's prayers that he would put on his better suit and the hat in which

he appeared at kirk and market, to show his better breeding. "I will not stand covered in Sir Walter's presence," he said; "and, as for my clothes, they're well enough. He knows me for a country loon, whatever fine suit I might wear."

"Loon, did the laddie say? and what next? I would like to see either knight or yeoman, in all Fife, that would dare to call Peter Oliphant loon," his mother said.

"And so would I," he said, with a laugh. He was strong and straight and tall, with the brown hair and the laughing eyes that belonged to his race. But they were eyes that could look fierce enough when occasion required.

"By my troth, I would like that better," he continued, as they set out; "a bout at single-stick, or a good frank blade, I am not that ill at: but what am I to say to the old laird? a man wants lear for a presence-chamber, even if it's but an old knight's."

"You have lear enough for that," said the minister, "if you would but mind half that I have put into you, at the point of the sword, as a man may say."

"A little Latin, and a shelf of old books," said Peter; "but you would not advise me, Maister Melville, to tirl off a verb to Sir Walter, even if I could mind it, the first time he has bethought himself that I'm alive and within reach."

"My lad, I would not lippen to his bethinking himself," said the minister; "just you mind it's mostly my doing, and my credit's concerned. Na, I will not tell you, not a word, what to say; nature will tell you, and that fine spirit of your ain that never let you be overly modest before me. And I hope, so far as learning goes, I am of more account than Sir Walter, if that was of any consequence."

"Little doubt of that," said

Peter; but he was wise enough to know that this was indeed of very little consequence, and that it was an extremely different thing standing before the minister in

Carnbee manse, though he was a man of learning, and thus stepping suddenly into the presence of old Sir Walter, though he had no letters at all.

CHAPTER III.

Peter Oliphant went into the great hall of Kellie Castle with very mingled feelings. Though he had lived all his life almost within sight of the home of his race, he had never crossed the threshold before; and a kind of awe, a kind of defiance, the inalienable attraction of an ancient family house, mingled with the indignant sentiment of a scion of the family upon whom its door has been always closed, made his cheek glow and his heart beat. This, then, was Kellie, which had been the home of his fathers, which might be his home if justice prevailed and the law of heirship and lineage. It was not a splendid place to overawe him. The house of Kellie was not rich. Whatever superfluity the family had ever possessed, Sir Walter and his sons had managed to get rid of in the days when they went to England with King James — perhaps, like so many Scotch gentlemen, in hope of advancement, but, like so many more, only wasting their small substance in a brief attempt to hold head among the great English lords ten times as rich as they were. There were few signs of grandeur in the hall: a little show of silver on the buffet; heavy old velvet curtain with tarnished embroideries; some carved furniture of noble workmanship, marked with the three crescents of the family arms. Those arms were dimly blazoned, too, on the high, carved mantelpiece, with that proud motto which poverty turns

into a brag or a jest, according to the humour of the wearer—*À tout pouvoir*. Peter knew that much at least, if no other word, of the French tongue, and had said it over to himself many a day. It was but a sad word in the old house that had little to provide and few to provide for—none but the old man and the helpless girl. But if ever this house should come to the strong hands, that if strength and labour and daring could do it would, so help him heaven! carry it out to the letter! Peter's head, all throbbing and resounding with excitement, was in a state of exaltation to which he had never felt the parallel. And as it happened, the first thing that met his eye was Mistress Jean, the heroine of the other day's half-adventure. She was seated on a stool in the recess of the great window, with a great book clasped in her arms, too heavy to hold, and over which she was stooping, bent almost double. Jean's kirtle was not so well preserved nor her snood so fresh as those of his own little sister at Over-Kellie: and to his yeoman's eyes she was doing nothing useful, nor perhaps able to do anything useful—a creature not made for common occupations, but to be kept in sweet leisure and pleasure like one of the lilies of the field. *À tout pouvoir!* Here was one of the things for which it would be his duty to provide. The thought brought a sudden glow over him—the heat of resolution

and enthusiasm. It was the climax of all those mingled and tumultuous thoughts that had been surging in his breast.

Jean looked up at the sound of the heavy steps ringing upon the floor, and, throwing down her heavy book, darted forward; but, seized with a sudden access of shyness, stopped and drew back before she had come up to the visitors, and stood looking at them—herself a very pleasant image, impetuous yet timid, her figure suddenly arrested in all its swiftness of motion, her lips in their meaning of speech. The sight of Peter Oliphant, so unexpected an apparition, made her dumb.

"We have come, Mistress Jean," said Mr Melville, "to speak a word with Sir Walter, so please you, and by your brother's ain desire."

"By his—ain desire!" Jean looked at the pair before her. The well-known figure of the minister, and the other, so much more interesting, still in all the novelty of recent discovery, a personage not precisely like the young Ansters of her acquaintance, wanting something, possessing something, a different kind of being. Indeed the rustic young gentlemen were but little superior even in breeding to this handsome yeoman, with his greater maturity and higher consciousness of life and its struggles. They were good to laugh with, to mock at, to dance with on the very few occasions when such an opportunity occurred. But she had met with a reality of life in the person of this modest yet ardent young man, who reddened when he looked at her, which Jean had never encountered before. At Sir Walter's own desire! was it on account of herself, for some reason connected with that meeting, which some one must have betrayed and reported? This

idea had no time to grow, but it flashed upon her suddenly, almost choking her with the sudden rise and hurried pulsation of her heart.

"We will but bide a moment with your permission till Maister Neil comes forth to bid us to the knight's presence," said the minister. "And it will not be long, seeing the hour was fixed by himsel'."

"There is somebody with him," said Jean: and then her awe of the situation yielding a little as she grew familiar with it, she laughed and added, "It is one you do not love."

"And who may that be?" said Melville. His question was answered in a way much more significant than any reply of hers. The curtain over the door of Sir Walter's sitting-room was audibly thrust back, without, however, revealing immediately the person coming forth: and a voice said, speaking to the old knight within, "My lord shall hear every word of your good intentions, every word! it is the thought of a true kinsman, whatever comes. Be sure my lord shall hear: and farewell, sir, and the blessing of God."

The new-comer paused to draw the curtain back to its usual folds, covering the door, and then he turned round, and with a hasty exclamation of surprise became aware of the group in the hall. He was more conspicuous in his dress as a clergyman than was the minister of Carnbee, with something on his dark head that suggested a tonsure, though no such mark of the beast was permitted in Scotland, and wearing the cassock of a priest. He came forward, however, with much appearance of cordiality, "Ah, Brother Melville, it's long since we met! If we've both come on the same ghostly errand, I wot our penitent

will get something confused in his Belief."

"I come on no ghostly errand," said Mr Melville, "but concerning the affairs of this fleeting world: which have their importance too, as you will agree with me."

"That do I—and whiles more bewildering still," said the Curate of Pittenweem, rubbing his hands. "We have no doubt the luck, my kind neighbour, to take different views on that subject too."

"It may be so," Melville replied gravely, but he added no more. He had no inclination to disclose his hand, as his opponent had done involuntarily by those last words behind the curtain. Low of Pittenweem looked at him fiercely, but without any visible change of tone.

"And how's all with you, Pate," he said with a smile. "I heard a bonnie story the other day of one of these wild soldier fellows that are just a pest on the roads, and how he was scared away and took the road west, meddling with no person: for fear of a certain muckle rider, bigger than himself, from the Over-Kellie gait."

"Oh, and it was me, Sir John!" cried Jean; "and the loon was after me on my pony, till there came in sight——" Jean stopped suddenly, crimson all over, half with annoyance at herself for having spoken, half because of the smiling glance which Low directed from her to Peter Oliphant, and back again—a smile which developed into a low laugh of malice, and which filled her with unaccountable shame.

"There came in sight—the paladin, the grand knight"—he said these words to the accompaniment of his laugh, till every line of Peter's rustic dress, the blue bonnet in his hand, the heavy shoes on his feet, seemed to come

out under the sarcastic look, as if the curate had been holding up a candle to show their roughness. And then he turned away, still laughing softly to himself, and rubbing his hands. "I will not interrupt such braw company," he said. "Good day to you, Mistress Jean: and I wish ye, madam, a good fulfilment to all your virtuous wishes; and one of those days ye can tell your mother, Pate, I'll come in for a crack, and to hear the country news. Brother Melville, we'll probably not be so long, you and me, this time of meeting again."

"Maybe not, Maister Low," said Melville.

"Wherever the —— is, there will the eagles be gathered together," said the other, going lightly towards the door, with a wave of his hand and a nod of his head. Mr Melville drew a long breath.

"That is no canny forerunner," he said, "Peter, my good lad, for you and me; but I will haste and see if the auld knight is wearied, or if he'll see you still. Bide here for me."

When Peter was left alone with the young lady, there was a pause of much embarrassment between these two young people, so suddenly brought together by malicious suggestion, and by the involuntary flash of thought that went from one to another, in the unlikely and unexpected combination, in which all suddenly, in a moment, they had been placed. Jean, who was full of saucy words at other times and in other company, at this moment, when she would have given all her small possessions for the power to throw one jibe at him, could not find a word to say. It was Peter, whose grave mood had more solidity and could better resist the excitement of the situation, who was the first to speak. "I have a

charge from my mother, Mistress Jean, with her duty—which is maybe more than is due from her to you; but my mother, Lady Jean, though she is the best woman in the world, was but a farmer's daughter, and cannot get out of her head that the laird's daughter is a Princess in the land."

"I have no quarrel with her for that," said Jean, restored to herself; "but if I am a Princess you will maybe live to be the King. Here we are, us two, and it's between us, Maister Peter. You are the just heir; but I am the more just if it were not that I am a lassie, and whose fault is that? I am sure it is by no will of mine."

"My Lady Jean," said Peter, "you say well it is my just right, as the next man of the blood; but if by Sir Walter's will it should fall to you, as may be—mind you this, whatever happens, I'll stand for you through fire and water, and be your man, and a true kinsman as long as I live."

"No me!" cried Jean, giving a spring in her excitement. "If it falls to you, I'll fight you every step, and go to the law with you, and never yield while I've breath!"

Peter looked at her with a tender admiration—but that ineffable way of taking the girl's hot words as if they meant nothing, which not even love itself can make palatable to a girl. "Well-a-well," he said gently, "the one thing and the other they mean just about the same."

"But nothing of the kind," she cried, almost with a soft shout of passion, "nothing of the kind! they mean——" here it suddenly struck Jean quite irrelevantly, as he stood before her with a deprecating smile, by every turn of his figure and change of his face recommending himself to her, seeking to please her, asking nothing better

than to serve and help her,—suddenly and supremely that he was a bonnie lād, that nobody had ever looked at her like that, nor spoken to her like that before. She stopped and gasped and put out her hand to him, which was as unexpected as any other of her movements. "Cousin Peter," she cried, "there's my hand upon it; we'll be grand enemies! we'll be true as auld Sir William's sword, that he keepit the castle of Stirling with, that hangs there upon the wall. We'll fight fair, and never say an ill word one of the other. And there's my hand."

She expected nothing but a comrade's grasp; but young Pate of Over-Kellie had the gracious manners of the old chivalry, without knowing whence they came. He stooped low almost to his knee, and kissed the hand held out to him—an unlooked-for homage which altogether overwhelmed the rustic maiden, who was scarcely by her own nature a lady of romance. And at that moment the heavy curtain was drawn, and Mr Melville's head put out calling Peter. The sudden light of a delightful smile shone over the minister's face. "Ah!" he said, with a soft laugh, which was not of ridicule but content. It was enough, however, to send Jean back to her window-seat, all one blush, and to make Peter draw himself up almost to more than his stature, as very red and portentously serious he followed, transported out of all his nervousness about Sir Walter—into the presence of the old knight.

Sir Walter sat by the fire, which smouldered sullenly, as if it felt the inappropriateness of its presence on a warm spring day, as the centre of the scene. But the old master of Kellie was cold, the blood ran slow in his veins, and

all the fires of living were as low in him as the dull glow in the coals. The gown in which he was enveloped was lined with fur, and wrapped closely round him; and his head was so sunk into its soft collar that the effect of his upward look was as if a pair of eyes alone looked over his raised shoulder at the young man who came in. But there was life in the look, which contradicted every other sign of diminished vitality. It seemed almost to strike at Peter like the flash of a blade into the air. The steel-like light quivered, and then suddenly the old man turned his head away. There was a pause, and both of his visitors thought for a moment that the old knight had fallen asleep or lost consciousness—till at last the minister spoke, half alarmed. He touched with a finger the wide sleeve of Sir Walter's coat. "Here is the young lad, Sir Walter. Come in bye, Pate—show yourself—and be not blate. What, man! ye are here in what may be your own house."

Peter took a step forward into the room, opposite to the light which fell full upon him, his somewhat rustic air lost in the temporary exaltation of his look; but Sir Walter had returned to his fire, and looked at him no more. His voice came out of the fur collar of his gown, as out of a cave. "Ay! the young lad, say you? And what is his will, and his errand here?"

"Speak to him, man; speak to him!" said the minister, in an under tone.

"I have no purpose, Sir Walter," said Peter; "but that ye were thought to send for me; and me—I was very willing to come, as your kinsman, and to ask how you did."

"Ay!" said Sir Walter again,

"as my kinsman! Blate! I see little sign that he is blate. Let him speak for himself. There are plenty of loons in Fife that will swear themselves my kinsmen, however they came by the name."

Peter was stung by this disdainful speech. "I am no loon," he said, "minister, as you well know; and as for how I got the name, Sir Walter he kens weel, seeing I am but his second cousin, when all is done, twice removed."

"Ah, so! are you all that?" said the old knight: he raised his head, and once more Peter felt himself struck as by a flame. But again the light quivered, and Sir Walter swerved, and his head sank among his furs. Then he added, averting his look, "What is your will of me, young man?"

"Nothing," said Peter. His heart swelled, a sudden sense of pity moved him for the desolate old age before him—so lonely, so void of all the charities and tenderness which ought to encircle the old. "And yet," he said, a remorseful sense of all his own advantages over this solitary, chilled, and suffering old man melting his spirit, "Sir Walter, if there was any pleasure I could do you, for the sake of the drop's blood between us, and because you have none of your own—"

"Eh! eh! what is that he says?—what is that he says?"

"Sir, I would fain, fain do you a pleasure, if that were possible," Peter said.

It was some time before the old knight spoke. "Gramercy for your kindness, lad," he said; "I have plenty to do for me all I want. I seek no service from the like of you."

"Yet it would be given out of a good heart," Peter said.

These words of manly kindness to the weak, given with an insist-

ence of which Peter, blate of nature as the minister had said—that is, proudly shy of expressing emotion, as it is the drawback of his countrymen to be—would not have believed himself capable, made a curious commotion in the still air of that chamber, where all was stagnant, and life and charity were seldom heard. Sir Walter put out a blanched hand with a gesture to the minister, calling him forward, “Ye have tutored the lad what to say.”

“I would think shame,” said Melville, “to try to tutor what’s native to a gentle spirit. And, Sir Walter, you are more understanding than to believe what you say.”

The old knight dropped his head again, and was silent once more. Then he said, without raising his face, with his eyes fixed on the low red of the fire, and a voice half buried in his fur collar, “Did I hear ye say Pate?”

“His name is Peter——”

“Pate,” repeated the old man, vaguely. “There was once another—but keen, keen as a hawk, and gallant, and fine in every limb. Not like that yeoman from the fields. Take him hence, take him hence! There is that in the turn of his head that goes, that goes”—he made a pause, and gave forth a long slow breath—“to my hert!”

And again there was silence. Peter would have stolen away by natural instinct, but did not dare to break the deep stillness by a movement, and the minister stood

doubtful, hesitating, afraid to shorten an interview that might have important results, yet afraid at the same time to injure the impression that had been made.

“Ay, Pate,” Sir Walter said almost to himself, “Pate—like day to night, like a prince to a churl—but just a turn of the head, a trick of the voice. Eh! ye are still here? is it a service do ye think, young man, to spy on the privacy of one that, kinsman or no kinsman, is the head of your name?” he raised himself, putting his hand upon the table—“in Fife,” he added with a faint laugh, “in Fife—saving the rights of my lord. Ay, my lord, that’s the question. Well, sir! I thank ye for your coming, and dismiss ye from further attendance. Master Melville, at your leisure I will see you again.”

The hall was vacant when Peter, with strange visions through his brain, confused with his own good impulses and the less kind ones that came hurrying after, stepped into it again. He did not know what he had expected or hoped for, but there was disappointment and a little offence in his mind. He was not sure if he had acquitted himself as a man in this unusual trial or if he had failed. He was new to all these strange and conflicting feelings. The old man in his chamber, the death in life which Pate’s animated youth had never seen before, and the young lady in the hall, had given to him equally a great thrill and sensation of the novel and unknown. Life seemed to have begun for him to-day.

CHAPTER IV.

In Sir Walter’s chamber, after that interview, there were many comings and goings. Sir John Low, as it was still the habit to

call the curate, came every day, for the knight, in the many fluctuations of his mind, had at the last swayed towards the ritual

and formulas to which he had been accustomed in his youth, and there were consolations boldly administered, though with precaution, by the curate which the minister, although no further removed than the next parish, would have esteemed sinful mummeries and offences to the truth. Mr Melville gave no absolution, which the curate dispensed with confidence, soothing the aged gentleman with rites by which his wavering mind was supported, though he could not give above half his attention to them, but sat turning over and over in his mind the one question that occupied him even when the viaticum was put to his lips. Sir John came and went, and a silent man from St Andrews, with a soberly clad attendant bearing a bag full of papers and an inkhorn, also came and went, spending hours in the Castle, and called in ever for a new discussion by the major-dome, Neil Morison, who shared all the consultations, to which indeed his master gave but the same distracted half attention which he gave to the rites of the Church. The time had come to him when he could not fix his mind to anything—whether it was those matters which were pressed upon him as for his soul's weal, or those others which were in reality the permanent subjects of his thoughts. Sir Walter, indeed, amid his dreams and distractions, which broke everything with which he was occupied as an image reflected in water is broken by every blowing breeze, was conscious of many people coming and going, who were not seen of men. While he pondered over the disposal of his property, his sons, to whom it should have gone by course of nature, came and went fitfully, more clearly realised at those

moments when, in his *malaise* of mind and body, he became impotent of all other thoughts, and turned towards them as of old. Something had brought them back into the still air of that death-chamber—something which no one knew of, which the old man himself did not understand. It was the look of young Pate Oliphant, the turn of his head, something in his voice, those subtle tokens of kin which come and go, broken always, like that same reflection in water, not to be traced, but thrilling for a moment now and then through every nerve. That fugitive likeness had not inclined him towards Peter of Over-Kellie. It had struck out rather a tone of wrath, of harsh contrariety and opposition in his mind—with the impulse to push that interloper out of his way who dared to remind him of Pate, his own Pate of the other times. In his confusion of mind he did not remember how that suggestion came—had he dared to speak of Pate, this stranger who had no right? He forgot how it came. But Pate and the others had come back: they were vaguely about him, always eluding him when he would have appealed to them—present there he felt, by some secret understanding, known only to himself and them, which if he betrayed it would harm them all. And Sir John, quieting all the vague terrors in the old man's mind in respect to death—terrors only half real, too, for nothing was very real with Sir Walter—mingled other counsels, suggestions of another name in which there perhaps was an escape from the confusion of his soul.

The silent man from St Andrews disappeared one dim morning when the world was all white, stifled in an easterly haar, after a

sitting of an hour with Sir Walter in his chamber—and that afternoon when the minister of Carnbee appeared he was informed that all was nearly over, and that the old knight, who had hung so long between life and death, was in the very act of ending. The curtain was held back that Mr Melville might enter; but as this was at the very moment when Sir John was bending over the couch of the sufferer administering those rites which were sacrilege to the preacher, Melville solemnly and indignantly withdrew, and stood outside till all should be over. He stood against the curtain with a stern expression on his face, his eyes half closed, his lips sometimes moving. I fear he was angry that this mummary should be permitted in a "Christian land," and thought many a harsh word of his brother, even while he prayed fervently for the passing soul which these rites were dismissing in peace. A little time after Sir John emerged, solemn too, yet with something of triumph in his look. "He hath gone forth well provided on his last journey," he said; "his end has been peace." "If you call that peace," Melville could not keep from saying; "I hope his end was also justice." "It was judgment," said the other priest, walking back as if in a procession with his little vials: and the old hall, so large, so empty, its great windows full of the whitened mist, the shroud of the haar that covered all things, looked more desolate, cold, bare, and empty of life than words could say.

Before Sir Walter was carried to his rest in the family vault in Carnbee kirkyard it was known all over Fife that Kellie Oastle and estates had been left by his will neither to his sister nor to the next of kin, but to the head of

the family, my Lord Oliphant, then in London with King James, and not likely to put himself to much trouble in doing honour to the funeral. It is true that he was the head of the family, and also that there existed an additional link in the fact that Sir Walter had married his sister. But the fief of Kellie was one which came not from the parent house, but was acquired for his own hand by the original holder, the founder of this branch, so that its bequest to the chief was no reversion, but a free gift. Lord Oliphant was not rich; and poor as had been the state kept by the old knight in the lingering end of his days, his inheritance was not one to be despised. The knowledge made a great sensation in the neighbourhood, where there had been many speculations on the subject, the claims of Mistress Jean and of Pate Oliphant having been largely discussed. By some of the neighbours it had been believed that Sir Walter had no right to exclude the heir-at-law; but this had been warmly disputed by others, who held that the death of all the immediate members of his own family left the old knight a free hand, and that, in the absence of any legal settlement, he had a right to do what he liked with his own. His funeral brought together all the gentry from that side of Fife, both gentle and simple indeed, of the East Neuk, neighbours and tenants, a numerous company. And at this ceremony the positions of the two clergymen were reversed. Sir John of Pittenweem was not looked upon with very favourable eyes in the Kingdom, and his return to the ancient ways, though it had to be winked at by those who were aware that authority was no longer entirely on the side of the Reformed Kirk, and

that protection was now extended even to something very like the odious Mass—was much against him in the opinion of the multitude. That he had “played his cantrips” about the dying man was whispered from one to another, and that he was a rank prelatist was universally known. Maister Melville, that excellent and sound divine, had now all the say.

There were other strange features in this funeral which were long remembered. For one thing, there was nobody to conduct the mourning with authority. Peter Oliphant stepped forward to follow the coffin, and no one gainsaid his right to take the place of chief mourner; but he was modest and a little backward in marshalling the others, notwithstanding the support he received from several of the chief gentlemen present, who acknowledged the title of the next of kin, even though it was known that he was not the heir. But was he not the heir? would not natural right prevail, though in opposition to an old man’s testament, a doited old man! These words were freely spoken even as the long procession set out upon the heavy country road, winding dark and silent between the hedgerows. Was he not a doited old man? Had not he taken, as somebody had related, Pate Oliphant for his own son Pate, who, poor lad, had been but a rover, and broken, folk said, his father’s heart. And there were some even who whispered that it was with the idea that Pate of Over-Kellie was his own Pate, and to punish that ne’er-do-weel, that Sir Walter in his dotage had left his lands away from the natural heir. This discussion, however, was not all or even the most remarkable part of what occurred.

For at the cross-roads, where the way to Carnbee turned off from the highway, a young gentleman, followed by three or four retainers, came up almost at a gallop, with every sign of hard riding, and in his travelling-dress, and made an effort to disturb the decorum of the funeral by forcing his horse into the line and taking the place next to the coffin where Pate walked leading the procession. This incident caused a pause, and such an interruption of the solemnity as threw the line of the mourners into confusion, and turned the conventional stillness and whispered conversations of the funeral party into something like a brawl. The new-comer proclaimed himself the representative of Lord Oliphant, his son, sent to render the last honours to his kinsman, and could only be prevented with the greatest difficulty from taking his place forcibly at the head.

This noisy interruption, and the bad manners of the young gallant, who, when prevented from taking the place of Pate, rode on himself and his followers at either side of the coffin, breaking the quiet not only by the excitement of their appearance but by the clangour of their ride, and the breach of all those Scotch decorums which have always been so rigid in respect to burial. Brawling at such a moment was not indeed unheard of, any more than at any other moment, in the temper of the times. But the depths of the peaceful country, where no such thing had been thought of, and where my Lord Oliphant had neither friend nor enemy, was displeasing to all. Nevertheless, perhaps, had it not been for the steady backing of the minister and one or two of the elder men, the position of Pate would have been a disagreeable

one; for the sympathies of the gentry were more with the Master of Oliphant than with the humbler youth, whose blood they acknowledged, but whose breeding had been that of a yeoman rather than of a landed gentleman. Pate himself, however, proved his gentility by a bearing much more noble than that of the intruder. He held his place with determination and without flinching, yielding no step. And thus they carried old Sir Walter to his grave.

On the return, however, Pate was less certain of his right and less supported. It was the intruder then who had the upper hand. The elder men might look coldly upon so irreverent an assertion of the position; but the younger ones, who knew, or desired to know, the Master of Oliphant, were glad to push forward, to claim his acquaintance, and to accompany him back to Kellie Castle, where at least he had now the first right to be. Pate felt himself left behind to the company of the tenants and the smaller lairds, who, like himself, were rather patronised than on an equal footing with the great proprietors. Mr Melville made an effort to draw him into the quiet of the manse, which would have been safer; but it was more natural that, indignant and injured as he felt himself, he should prefer the sympathy of the others, who were full of angry suggestion and advice. The young man had been profoundly disappointed and cast down by Sir Walter's will. It was the destruction of his brightest hopes: but it had not occurred to him that the question was not closed, or that there might still be a chance of having justice done him. Now the utterances of companions were no longer in whispers. The doited

auld man? Was he indeed a doited auld man? Pate thought of the heavy look, the dreamy eye, the sudden kindling like a flame of Sir Walter's brief words and moments of animation. He shook his head at first, but afterwards his own mind took fire. It was galling to hear the voices, already gay, of the others who clustered round young Oliphant, and streamed after him, full of pleasure in the excitement of the stranger's arrival, and also in their release from the gloomy ceremony: he and his friends came behind, and different were their tones and their looks.

"It is e'en like the impudence of thae minions of the Court," said one of the neighbours, "that follow the English fashion, and despise their native ways."

"English fashion or no," said another, "right is right. Body and banes! If it were me, I would have my lord before the Feifteen before I drew breath."

"And let them prove that the old knight was fit to mak' a disposition——"

"I'll tell ye just this, Over-Kellie," said one of the tenants, raising an expository hand. "I had a word with Andrew Morison, that is the cousin of Neil at the Castle, and the hired man of Maister Playfair of St Andrews, the writer—him ye ken of. He had a look within yon closed cha'mer, at his maister's call, to bring in the papers. And Andrew, he says the auld man was like an auld ghaist—the colour o' the pairchment spread out on the table, and his een dead in his heid."

"Which was nowise natural," said another. "I hae seen him mysel', when there was question o' a feu or siclike, that took his pairt, and a free-spoken man that would hae his argument and tak' his jest

like another. You'll no tell me it's the time to test, when a man's like yon."

"If it had been a reasonable testament——"

"Or like a leal kinsman: now Sir Walter was aye considered a very honourable person when he was in his own command."

"Pate Oliphant," said one of his own comrades, "I would fecht till my last drop o' blood, before I wad yield Kellie Castle and your auld name to a popinjay of an Englished lord."

"My auld name," said Pate, holding his head high, "is in no danger, Beaton, from any man."

"Oh, ay, ay," cried Beaton, impatiently, "we all ken your pride. But Oliphant of Over-Kellie is one thing and Oliphant of Kellie Castle is another: and Lord! if it were but for this day's work——"

"Cause enough, and reason gude for feud or fray; but it's law and not blood that's in the question," said another. "A bit of yellow pairchment and a muckle false seal, and the name of a doited auld man!"

All these speeches and many more of the same kind rang in Pate's ear and echoed through and through him as he rode home.

CHAPTER V.

The house of Over-Kellie had not the dignity of the Castle; yet the living-room into which Peter strayed with absent eyes, flinging himself down on an oak bench beside the long table, was not entirely without pretension. The windows were high in the walls; the fire was a wide-spreading ingle, with some seats under its ruddy arch. A large oaken table occupied the centre of the room; but it was kept with greater care than was common, cleanly swept, with a pair of large silver candlesticks on the high mantel-shelf, and some carving on the panels. On one side of the fireplace a casement had been put in with a broad sill, so that the women might have light for their work, and weapons hung upon the walls by way of ornament—an old Andrea Ferrara, and some pieces of plain armour such as were worn by squires and yeomen. The only thing that made any stronger call upon the attention was the carving of the mantelpiece, on which there was what seemed a rough copy of

the shield which occupied a similar position at Kellie Castle, with the motto sprawling in rather ungainly letters, out of proportion with the armorial bearings, *A tort pourvoir*, in a lengthened scroll by itself.

The Leddy, or, to compromise the matter, the Mistress of Over-Kellie, which was a title equally befitting, whether she was by right Gudewife or Leddy, came hurriedly out of the house to greet Pate, eager to hear all that had happened, and what had specially befallen himself in this crisis of his affairs. The Mistress had still hoped, or persuaded herself she hoped, that the previous news about Sir Walter's will might be untrue; and, as she followed her son up the few steps which led to the great room, had overflowed in a string of questions, echoed by her daughter Margaret, who followed close upon her steps. "Oh, Pate! what did they say till ye? was the writer there? was there any person that had authority? Pate, my man, did you lay

his head in the grave?—for sure, it was your right."

"Ay," said Peter, "I laid his head in the grave—muckle good as that did me; for sure, as you say, it was my right."

"And is it true about the testament?" asked his sister.

"It canna be true—I will not believe it: it is but the ill-will of Maister Playfair," said the Mistress; "they were ever against our house."

"Mother, mother, what has the writer to do with it? he cannot alter what Sir Walter says. But maybe it is not so ill as we thought," said Margaret, with devouring eyes on her brother's face.

"Let me be! let me be! I would like a stoup of your ale, mother. The roads are very heavy both for man and beast."

"You are tired, my bonnie lad! Na, I'll not say another word," said the Mistress, while Margaret flew down-stairs to get him the refreshment he asked. "We might have thought if we had not been so taken up concerning the news. Na, na, I will not hurry you, my Patie. Just take your time, my bonnie lad!"

And she seated herself on the settle near the fire, and took up, not without a little ostentation and with a sigh of excitement, her habitual work. Margaret stood gazing on the other side of the table while he drank, and their united force of curiosity and suspense moved him more by repression than it had done by utterance.

"Well, then," said Pate, "hear this: my Lord Oliphant—that is the head of our name—if I were ten times over the first of it in Fife, no mortal man can contradict that."

A sob of opposition and protest came from the overcharged bosom

of the Mistress. Mortal man she was not, but woman; and therefore resistant to every statement which diminished the importance of those she loved.

"The head of our name," repeated Pate, with a wave of his hand, in fine acknowledgment of an allegiance which was not agreeable to him. "There is therefore excuse, if excuse were wanted. It is no alienation; but might, in the language of some persons, be conceived a giving back."

Pate was not without his share of schooling; he could be sententious, which has always been a possibility to a Scotsman, when he chose.

"Given back!" said the quick Margaret, "but it never came from thence. Look at the Buik, and look at the tree. It was no fief of Aberdalghe, but won by our awin spear and our awin bow."

The women were wild with this outrageous pretence; but Pate, whose heart, he thought, was broken, bent his head down on his hands, and spoke no word.

Afterwards he began to tell them what had happened, which they listened to with cries of indignation and wrath. If it had been the Prince of Scotland (or of Wales, as it was heard with indignation that the heir of the crown was now to be called) who had tried to push forth Pate from his lawful place, his mother and sister would have risked their loyalty to resist it. But a young popinjay of a Master of Oliphant, as Robbie Beatoun had justly said! And then by degrees they elicited from Pate all he had heard about Sir Walter's incompetence, and how Sir John and the Writer between them had swayed his mind, in spite of all that Maister Melville, good friend and true, had been able to do.

"I am no for fechtin'," said the Mistress. "I've seen more of it in my time than I would desire to see again; but to sustain a mortal wrong, and not to say a word—I would raise the country afore I would abide that."

"I would rather sell my shoon off my feet, and my gown off my back!" said Margaret, ever the first to see what was the real question.

"Whisht, mother, whisht! If it was to raise the country and haud the Castle against whoever should oppose! Ah!" cried Pate, with a sigh, "that was the way in the former days, when there was a king in Scotland."

"And whatfor no?" cried the Mistress, with a gleam of war in her eyes; but then she threw her apron over her head and began to cry. "The Lord forgive me," she said; "to bid the lads to fecht, that are aye o'er ready; and me that have seen the son brought in stiff and stark to his ain mother's hearthstane! Oh no, my Patie, no! I am an ill woman to think such thoughts."

"If that were the way of it!" cried Pate. "But the strong hand will not serve us, mother; and he is the chief of our name. How could I rouse the fisher-lads at St Monance, that are 'most Oli-phants, against the head of our own name?"

"There's not one of them but would follow you, Pate. It is you that are the head of the name!"

"Whisht, Peggy!—to their death and the ruin of their sma' houses, and starvation to their bairns—me that should rather feed and fend them!" Peter half turned with a wave of his hand towards the motto rudely carved upon the mantel-piece, "*À tout pouvoir*." He pronounced it as his equal might

do to-day, *À tout pouvoir*. "If ye ken nothing else, you ken the meaning of that."

The women turned their eyes to it sadly, both answering, yet with reluctance, to the spell. "Indeed it was an ill day it was pitten there," said the Mistress, shaking her head. "Your father, honest man—and blessed be his rest!—was just wud of these auld words. Never was there a crownpiece to ware upon unthankful folk but yon was what he said. Yon fishers in St Monance! He would point it to me that would have held him back, and says he, 'Ye dinna understand, Marg'ret, but I understand. The hail tot provided for: that's what it means—and the honour of my name.' 'Laird, laird,' I aye said, 'you are far o'er muckle taken up with the honour of your name.'"

"Not so," said Pate.

"Never so!" cried young Margaret, kindled and shining forth, her eyes "keen with honour" in a glow of youth and brightness against the old dull panelled wall.

"And that is just what cuts deepest," said the young man—"the law, and the siller: it is either to abide the wrong, or to risk the pickle land and the old roof-tree, and your living, mother. Say that Peggy is safe in Rob Beatoun's hands. But there is you and me, and them that hang upon us. Me, I could go away to the wars in Germany, where there's ever place for a Scot, like many a kinsman before me; but that would be no pleasant issue for my mother."

"O Pate! Pate!" she cried, otherwise speechless, holding up her hands in an agony.

"And the plea at law," he went on. "The plea at law! there's something that is as devouring as

the grave. And it's that is the only way. Look, mother! shall I take your living and mine and fling it to thae dogues? I might get righted of my wrong; but if not we would be beggars, with a wallet on our back and a staff in our hand. And what would come of the name, then, or the old o'erword of the name? My heart is just broken," cried Pate, with a wild movement of his arms. "Run the risk of everything we yet possess—or else brook the wrong. How is a man to decide? Whiles I think I would sooner perish than brook the wrong——"

"You must not do it, you must not do it!" cried the mother and daughter in one breath.

"Or be counted among the dyvors at the horn," cried Pate. "The broken men that have neither land nor dwelling to their name. The Lord preserve me! but I am in a sore strait. Dishonour one way and ruin the t'other. To be stripped of all, or to sit still like a coward and brook the wrong and the shame!"

At this moment the attention of the agitated group was suddenly diverted. The sound of a horse's hoofs, urged in a headlong gallop along the road, had been audible for a minute or two: and now there rang into the air the sudden clash of the swinging gate, the bringing up of a horse upon the paved yard, and the sound of some one flinging from the saddle. "Where are they? in the big room?" some one cried: and the door swinging open admitted Mistress Jean from the Castle, breathless with haste, excitement, and agitation, her fair face glowing, her bright hair waving, her riding-skirt splashed with the heavy mud of the road. "Oh take me in!" she cried. "Oh save me, Leddy; I have no place to hide my head,

and Kellie has come into a stranger's hands."

"My bonnie bairn!" cried the Mistress, rising from her seat, "who has dared to frighten you like this?"

"Oh, I'm safe, I'm safe," cried Mistress Jean, "now I'm here. But I thought I would never win here——" She flung herself into the great chair from which the Mistress had risen. "The hall is full of men," she said, pushing back her hair from her forehead, "drinking wine and holding muckle loud talk—and my brother, Sir Walter, that was lying there yestreen, only laid in his grave this very day."

"If there was any man that dared," cried Peter, flaming up in response, with a kindled eye and flashing face, "to lay a little finger upon you——"

"On me!" cried Mistress Jean, in high disdain. "He would have brooked a buffet in reply, and that I can answer for; but yonder young lord—if he's the Maister of Oliphant, as they say, he does muckle harm to a good name—he cried to me as a bonnie lass, the coward loon! and held wine to me to drink the health of the new lord—me! that am Leddy by all rules in my ain right."

"And so you are," cried Margaret, "I have ever said so—if nature and law were the same."

The Mistress shook her head. "Not for a lass, not for a lass!" she said; but her kind hand rested with a caressing touch upon the girl's shoulder. "Think no more o't," she said, "my bonnie doo! you are safe here."

"But I must think more of it," cried Mistress Jean. "I am no doo, but of a fighting race. He is riding off the morn, that painted pyet of a Maister—maybe to-night. And by St Margaret!—which is a good

oath, for we bear her blood—I'll hold the auld house against him and all his! I will do it! Cousin Pate, you're my chief vassal, for you're the next of the name: you're my captain; up with you, when you hear what I say! Raise every Oliphant in Fife. They are no maidens spinning at their wheels, but buirdly men!"

Pate had started with a reddening cheek at the word vassal; but with another glance at her, a smile of wonderful tenderness and brightness came over his face, and he bowed his head with a look of mingled reverence and protection beautiful to see. "That am I," he said, "and at my Lady's bidding I'll—" He paused again. The old cloud, dissipated for a moment, came over him. "But, Mistress Jean," he said, "bethink you first what it will be. Clean rebellion against King and law."

"I have ever been a Queen's woman," cried Jean; "and that for your law!" she cried, snapping her fingers, "that takes your native heritage out of your hands, because, at God's will, not your own, you are a lass born instead of a man!"

"Eh! and from the man also—the true heir—at the will of a doited auld laird," cried the Mistress, forgetting the foremost grace of hospitality in her indignation for her son.

"How dare you call my brother, Sir Walter, a doited—" cried Jean, with flashing eyes. And then suddenly she calmed down. "It's maybe true, since both him and me we are cheated of our rights. And are ye then so slack, Peter Oliphant, that for the sake of King and law ye will not stand to defend your own?"

"Lady Jean," said Pate, "I and

mine are at your orders, and our right is the same; but for the lads that would follow me, and rise at your name—the fishers at St Monance, the small farmers in till Carnbee—every man with his little gear that he has gathered out of the heavy ploughland or the stormy sea—do ye mind that every one would be putten to the horn, their sma' tenements levelled with the earth, and their bairns scattered to the winds? For this house we are ready, though it means want for my mother and banishment (at the best) for me. We were not even without a thought of it, as they will tell you,—though I allow for our own hand,—till that glowered at me in the face."

"What?" cried Jean, staring wildly, as if he had pointed to a ghost.

He pointed again in silence to the fireplace, where Jean's lighter eyes caught the rough carving with a flutter of volatile observation. "Eh!" she cried, "but it's ill done! But all this mocking, and I want a true man. What are these auld words—if I kent what they meant—to you, Peter Oliphant, and me?"

"They are just the o'erword of the race," he said, "that our fathers have left to us—the best they could, and the most meaning in the least buik.¹ To provide for all, that's what it means—no to devote them to death and ruin for our service. Mistress Jean, when you think well of it, that will suffice, I trow, for you and me."

"I trow no such thing!" cried the girl; "for what should a man die for if not for his laird's rights, or his leddy's, as the case may be? Is there aucht more honourable, Pate?—a good cause and a good

¹ Smallest space.

weapon, and stout auld walls to hold against the world! Me, that am only a lass, the more's the pity, it would put pith into the very arm of me!"

She held it out, pushing up her sleeve—a well-knit, vigorous, brown arm, but so slim and soft that the tension of the general feeling was relieved by the sudden laugh into which she herself was the first to break. "But a pistol covers all that," she added afterwards. "I could load and I could fire with any man."

"But no to shoot a neighbour dead," said Margaret, with a shiver, holding the soft arm with two caressing hands, smoothing down the sleeve over it with a tender touch. The thrill ran through the other, too, though she tossed her fair head.

"I did not say a neighbour; but if it was yon fause gallant, with his air like a lady's love, and his coarse cry to what he thought was a lass of no account—— Yon was

no gentleman, Cousin Pate," she said, turning to him with a glance which made Pate's face glow crimson, and filled his heart with a sudden flood of pride and exhilaration. The appeal in itself carried a sanction higher than that of any court of honour. Jean's implied acknowledgment of her rustic cousin's highest claim could not have animated him more had it come from the king upon his throne.

But the lamp burned late that night in the windows of Over-Kellie, and many were the anxious consultations held under its roof. As the evening went on, it was Pate and his mother whose voices were the most heard. Jean fell, like Margaret, into the position of an eager listener, submitting for the first time to the supremacy of strength and age, leaving the decision to them, flashing only now and then, as Margaret did, an eager light of suggestion upon every new discussion as it rose.

CHAPTER VI.

News were brought to Over-Kellie only in the afternoon of the next day that the new heir, who had made so ungracious an entrance, was gone. It was brought by Neil Morison, in the faded velvet doublet which was his habit of state, attended by the varlet called Jaicque (*Anglicè*, Jack), who was man enough to groom all the horses left in the Kellie stables—to wit, a sober steed of all work, now ridden by Maister Neil, and the skittish pony of Mistress Jean, who held in these old unused stalls something like the same position which her mistress held in the Castle. It was Jaicque who opened the gate, and "tirmed at the pin" of the house door, and held the

stirrup while the major-domo got down from his horse, which he did slowly and with difficulty. He had been Sir Walter's faithful attendant, and long confinement to his master's chamber had given to his scarcely more than middle age the aspect of an old man. He gave the Mistress a bow which almost alarmed her, it was so grand, a much finer bow than that with which he signified his sense of the presence of his own young lady, whom it appeared he had come to seek.

"I was weel aware," he said, "and it was the conviction of our Mistress Marjory, who is my Lady Jean's auld caretaker, and kens her ways, that our young damsel,

Leddy Over-Kellie, would have taken shelter here."

"It was the natural place for her to come to,—my son Pate," said the Mistress, "being her own blood relation and next of kin."

"Madam," said Neil, "we've mair confidence in yoursel' as a guardian than in any man whatsoever. But we judge it quite safe for the young ledly to come her ways hame."

"I will never cross the door," cried Jean, "as long as yon painted pyet, yon fause lord, is there."

"The popinjay," said Margaret, in the background, proud of the name her lover had given.

"He is nae lord," said Neil; "his father is the Lord Oliphant, and he is but the Master, and may never be a lord at all for ought that we can tell,—nor would it be, I'm thinking, any great loss to the name, for a wilder or a wantoner I have never seen. Anyway, Mistress Jean, he is gane. And, so far as I hear, none of them will meddle us more till the summer, and for the present you are better at hame than any other where."

"Till the summer," Jean said, with sparkling eyes. She gave a glance at Pate, who had just entered the room, and stood a little perplexed and doubtful on the threshold in his farmer's dress, as he had hastened from the fields on hearing of this emissary from the Castle. For aught he knew, it might have been some scornful message from the interloper which Neil brought; and he stood, his ruddy face clouded with unusual sternness, expectant and somewhat defiant. "Cousin Pate," cried Jean, over the head of the old servant, "yon popinjay is gone, and they are not coming back till the summer: the summer, and there's three months to that. Oh, if ye were my real captain, and

like our forebears of the past! Neil, did you ever hear tell that Kellie Castle had held out against a mortal foe?"

"And where is the mortal foe, my young ledly? Sir Walter, my honoured master, had neither feud nor fray with any man—that is," said Neil, with caution, "not for many a year."

"Eh! may the green turf lie soft upon him," said the Mistress; "he was an auld, auld man."

"No so old as ye think—if it were not for care and sorrow. I have seen a stour about the Castle, and swords drawn, if that is what you mean, my Lady Jean. There are few castles in Scotland, nor even ha'-houses," said Neil, "that could say less."

"Eh, and that is true!" said the Mistress; "but the present times are more quiet, the Lord be thanked!"

"The most of the fiery blood is away," said the old man. "Your own son now, young Over-Kellie, there, where he stands, he has his farms and his fields to think of, and never fashes his thoom about feats of arms."

Pate, still lingering at the door, grew darkly red, and came forward with a gloomy brow. "I have my father's sword, Maister Neil," he said, "ready for any man that doubts my spirit."

"Ay, ay, I ken that," said the major-domo. "The father's sword, maist likely rusted to its scabbard, and as heavy as a plough pettle. But the young gallants have blades that flash out at a moment's notice, as free as breath, though it's the stoppage of breath they're bent upon." The old servitor laughed, a low laugh, like the creaking of a door, at his own wit. But it was at Pate's expense, and the young man felt it to the bottom of his heart.

"Yesterday was no day for a brawl," he said; "but let him cross my gait again, and he will learn if there is rust or not on a man's sword."

"I lovena the lad," said Neil. "He has nae respect either for a young lass nor an auld man. But he's no sweart with his blade, and he'll stand up to you were you Wallace wight."

It is hard upon a young man to be driven to protestations of what he would do if the occasion came, and Neil's tone was bitter to Pate, in the uneasy pride of his position, thus waved aside more or less offensively not only by the others, but by the very servants of the others, conscious of all the external differences between the place he claimed and that to which, notwithstanding his claims of blood, he had been born. Might ill be the fate of that Oliphant who was first led away by love of a fair face, and married a farmer's daughter, and settled down on a yeoman's land! And yet that Oliphant was the source of all his claims, the honour of his house, and a far better man than if, like any swash-buckler, the laird's younger son of Kellie had died in a foolish fray, and left behind him neither heir nor land.

"Cousin Pate," cried Jean, "mind that it is you I look to. I will not say another word; but the walls, they are old and they are strong, and if the men are not stout, the knaves belie their name: and as for your auld motto, I just cast it in your teeth. Provide, then, an' ye are so fond of it! and let it be for your lady, as is your bounden duty, and you the next kinsman." She took up the edge of her riding-cape, which Margaret with affectionate devotion had been arranging on her shoulders — at the spot where

the gold lace with which it was trimmed was frayed and broken — and held it up to him. "Next kinsman, and only friend," she said, putting her hand into his with a gleam of moisture in her eyes that made them twice as bright as usual: and they were bright enough at all times, as bright as stars to Pate's thought. They were not the Oliphant eyes, which in their kind were not to be despised, brown, glowing, and liquid, full of laughter and light: but blue, with such a sparkle in them as the sapphire has, and shooting out rays like arrows — that kind of blue fire which has something in it more keen than the brown, piercing and cutting like a dart. It softened with the last words, and the water swam in the darkness of the blue.

Pate said little for the rest of the day to the inquisitive and anxious women of his house; but he pondered long as he strode about the fields in the afternoon, and later in the night, when the labourers had gone to their houses, to the scattered clump of lowly cottages that sheltered beyond the farm-buildings, and all the members of the family within the house, bound to be early astir in the morning, had gone to rest. There had been talk enough and consultation. But though the Mistress and Margaret had not been able to refrain from carrying on the arguments of last night between themselves, there was a consciousness even in their minds that it was he alone who had to decide. And they had withdrawn to their beds, a little reluctant, yet constrained by necessity and a sense of duty, to leave him to himself. It was a relief to him when they were gone, and yet it troubled him to feel himself left under the flickering light of the cruse in the still-

ness of the house to face this problem which was his, and not another's. He had been more or less of an easy mind during all his youth, disturbed from time to time by his gentle blood and his possibilities, which from shadows, that they had been at first, had grown into present and real things, as old Sir Walter's family had failed one by one, and it had become more and more apparent that it was he, and only he, who was the heir. The lass who was the last of the house of Kellie had not seemed of much importance to Pate's eyes,—not more than she had been to old Sir Walter, who was her brother, though he might almost have been her grandfather, and to whom she was an accident, troublesome, and sometimes exasperating to think of, and therefore pushed aside and not considered at all. Neither did Pate think of her. He had been troubled at times by the consciousness that he had not been bred so well as he was born—that he had about him that something of the fields and the plough which made him different from the young gallants, the flash of whose ready rapiers from the scabbard was, as Neil had said, with wise and wounding justice, unlike the deliberate drawing of the sword which perhaps had rusted a little in its sheath. And the thought of this, and such incidents as had occurred yesterday, when the train of gentlemen who, though they resented his intrusion, and supported Pate in his rights, still crowded about the Master of Oliphant, and left his kinsman to such consolation as the humbler yeomen could bestow,—had irritated and vexed him. It seemed to Pate a humiliation, not only that they should withdraw, but that he himself should care.

But all these thoughts had gone

like last year's snow, in a new dilemma very differently felt. That he should not after all be the next in succession, the just heir; that there should be someone between him and Kellie,—to have discovered this, had he ever anticipated or dreamt of such a possibility, would have been in all his previous thoughts a sort of deathblow. But somehow that dread discovery did not hurt him at all. No; nor that he should be recognised as the first vassal, the loyal servant of this intruder, who shut him out of his lawful inheritance. He had tried for a moment to be angry, even to be wounded, but he had not succeeded. It had given him a shock; but the shock had been such as the discovery of a new inheritance, a something better even than Kellie, might have given. Who was it, this true heir, for whom he was called upon to give up the claim which had been dear as his life? who commanded him imperiously as the first vassal, the nearest kinsman, servant, and officer. It would have been incredible to him that he should have accepted such a position; that he should have met the call, not with defiance, rage, denial, but with a consent and acquiescence which astonished himself; which filled him with generous emotion, with a kind of pleasure, with a soft humorous sense of something beyond reason in it, foolish, noble, more exquisite than any emotion he had ever felt before. To secure the home of his fathers, the hope of his life, the right most dear to him—for Jean! not for himself. It brought the moisture into his eyes, a dew of pain, yet warm with every sweetness. He turned round on the heavy wooden stool, beside the big table, on which he sat, and fixed his eyes on the words scabbled in stone upon the chimney, and

still more misshapen and irregular in that medium through which he looked at them, "A TOVT POVRVOIR." What meaning had been in these words! He had seen himself the master of his fathers' house, the head of his name, the providence of his race. Not an Oliphant in St Monance, not a fisher on the coast, that would not be the better for him, that would not rejoice to think that the auld blood had been revived in the new master, and every ancient tradition of kindness from lord to vassal made true. It was no ignoble hope that had been in the young man's heart. No one had ever called old Sir Walter an ill laird; but he had grown old, indifferent, rapt in the shadows of his old age, no longer capable of thought or care for those around him. Whereas Pate was young, full of sympathy, full of vigour, knowing every man and caring for every house. To cry "An Oliphant!" in a street brawl, or take the crown of the causeway from any passer-by, had not been in his thoughts; but to be the defence of his own folk, the champion of Fife, one of the supporters of the common weal!

Pate rose up with a start, pricked by his thoughts, and went to the fireplace—leaning his head upon the rude carving, and gazing down at the smouldering red on the hearth. Would she be that? A bit of a lass, not much more

than a child, without knowledge; also a creature of caprice, moved not, like himself, by long-held, long-pondered resolution, but by every wind that blew, by sudden impulses, perhaps unwise, by the counsel of the moment, born to-day and gone to-morrow. He pressed his brow upon the stone till the carving was printed upon it, as it had been before on his heart. Who could tell what mood would sway her, what strength she would have, what instruction would commend itself to her—what (and perhaps this was the great question of all)—what husband she would marry? But that question, which suddenly roused the blood in every vein, so that Pate felt a sudden flush go over him from head to foot,—that question had to be crushed at once, having nothing to do with the matter. That was not his affair. No such solutions from fairyland were to be brought into the consideration of a man's duty. The women might dwell upon them. They might so, if they would, set injustice right, and contradict the laws of nature at their pleasure; but such considerations were not for him. The question was not one of fancy or of chance, but of what he, a strong man and a steadfast, taking gravely into consideration every side of the subject, was to do: and this was what he had to settle now.

CHAPTER VII.

"My friend Pate," said Sir John Low, "I cannot think that you have so little sense—a young man of havins, as I have ever kent you—as to oppose my Lord Oliphant in his lawfu' rights. The estate has been gifted to him fully

and fairly by him that had the power. And you have but the drap's blood. We are not denying your blood-right. You are the next of kin; but if Sir Walter thought it the best thing to put back the auld lands under the

hand of the undoubted head of the house——”

“It is just *that* that will have to be tried,” said Pate.

“Man,” cried Sir John, “what are you but a distant kinsman after all? And my lord also is a kinsman—maybe farder off in degree, but assured in line as the fountainhead to the stream.”

“Mess John,” said Pate, “we will leave counting the degrees. There is one that needs no counting, being the child of the same father, and more near in kin than I am, as I frankly allow.” Here Pate lifted his bonnet from his head with a certain solemnity. “That she is a maid and not a man is nought; for the maid has succeeded to the father as long as there has been law in Scotland. And I have even heard say——”

“Mistress Jean!” cried the curate, elevating his eyebrows; and he smote Pate on the back a jovial blow, all unlike his lean form and the gleam in his eyes. “Ha, my bonnie lad! you are none so simple for a country clown. You would strengthen one ill claim with another, and win the knight’s spurs by the help of the distaff? Whiles it is not a bad plan.”

That Pate’s cheek should have flamed at this filled him with a sense of humiliation; but it was anger and not shame that brought the red, which flushed fiercely over his brow and lent a red light to his hazel eyes.

“The lady’s claim is firm as Carnbee Law,” he said. “I yield to it, with no liking, nor even surety of well-doing. She may carry the auld castle that is the home of my fathers into a stranger name—the whilk would be the grief of my life. I yield to her, because I cannot in justice withstand. She claims me as her

defender, which doubtless I am, being the first man—in Fife—of my name.”

Sir John, who had been staring at him open-mouthed, here burst into a laugh. “And you tell me that’s your reason!” he cried, in a derisive tone.

“You, or any man,” said Pate, calmly. “And I would do the same,” he added with a smile, turning upon the half-priest, who followed stealthily, as far as he dared, the habits of the old faith, sure of indulgence in the unsettled state of affairs—“I would do the same if I were one of your lambs, that tell you all in your ear ahint the kirk-door.”

“It would be well for you, my lad, if you did the same,” said the curate, reddening in his turn; “and ye should hear from me that when you lippen to a young lass you are a fool for your pains.”

“What!” said Pate, “is that the counsel you give, Sir John? To leave the orphan lass undefended, and bow the head to the silken lord? That is not the lear that has been learned to me.”

“Silence, yeoman!” cried the angry curate. “Are you one to teach your betters, let alone your priest?”

“Ay,” said Pate, “or any honest man; and I acknowledge no priest but only him that teaches the Word—which never yet bade to pass over the weak, even when it is to your own hurt, as this is to mine.”

“Here’s one coming that will give you grand reason for every fule-deed you like to do,” cried Sir John—“ay, and tie you up safe and fast to the lass that ye think has such a grand tocher. But bide awhile, bide awhile, Pate the pious. Succouring orphans is a fine thing when your own rights are not so clear as ye thought;

but when you find a useless wife on your hands, and all the cows to milk, and the byres to clean——”

“You have an ill tongue, if you were ten times a priest!” cried Pate, with a clouded brow.

But the controversy was stopped by Master Melville, who came up hastily, quickening his usually sober steps at the sound of Pate’s voice raised above its usual tone, and the laughing, scornful attitude of Sir John.

“Your look is not peaceful, Peter,” he said, “nor your eye content.”

“Did ye expect to find me content, Maister Melville,” said Pate, “with my rights taken up by others, and myself scorned before my neighbours? I would then be a man not like other men.”

“The Lord of Over-Kellie,” said Sir John, “was, by my faith, near upon charging me with a cartel of war to that other nobleman the Lord Oliphant; but that I am a man of peace and carry no gage.”

“You might moderate your jesting, Brother Low,” said Melville, “and so show yourself a man of peace. This is not the time, Peter, to bandy words, with whosoever it may be. You have your duty to do for your kindred and your name.”

“It is what I am ready to do at all times,” cried Pate, hastily, eager to find in the minister’s face the counsel already established in his own.

“We will say good morrow, first,” said Melville, “to this reverend brother. It is an evil thing to be overly much concerned with the affairs of this world, Maister Low. Here are you and me, both led away by these heathenish disputes, that should have been in our quiet studies pondering our sermons, and the Lord’s Day coming on——”

“I am no man for long sermons,” said Sir John, “nor am I liked the less on that account, so far as I can see.”

“Well, sermons are my trade,” said Melville, passing his brother-clergyman with a bow. He put his arm in Pate’s, and led the young man with him, gently forcing his steps. “All he means,” said the minister, holding Pate’s arm tight and leading him on, “is to make you talk and give forth your foam and nonsense, the whilk he will turn into solid mischief. I hope I am no uncharitable,” he added, devoutly; “but come you, Patie, my man, and talk out your soul: you are safer with me than with him.”

“No, minister,” said Pate, “I have no need for blethering, as you seem to think: my mind is steady and made up. The young lady is more wronged than I am. She is her father’s just heir. She claims me as her first servant, and I allow the claim. I am the man nearest to her. I am fecht-ing, and I will fecht, to the death, for her right and not mine.”

“Pate! lad!” said the minister; his voice faltered, and even his step for the moment. Then he cried, “No wonder he did not understand!”

But Pate neither comprehended nor desired to comprehend the meaning of this reply. He was entirely preoccupied with his own thoughts. “That is my solemn determination,” he said. “I have had my fancies; but then I kent nothing of her, nor of her just rights. I will get them for her if I can, minister: it is my first duty, as the next of the name.”

“She is but a lassie,” said the minister, “and a wild one; no training, no mother, grown up just like a blade o’ grass on the lee. There is no telling what the like

of her may do. She will take your very heart out of your life, and never ken what a gift it is. She may not even thank you. She may think it's only her right and your duty."

"And what is it else?" said Pate. "You are all the professor I ever had: if my lear is poor it is your blame. I think I have heard from your very mouth that if a man does not stand for his ain, specially for them of his own house——"

"Oh, laddie, do not tackle me out of my own mouth!" cried the minister, peevishly; "many a foolish thing I've said. Meantime, you must mind that when the Apostle said yon, he was thinking nought of a man's house, according to your meaning of the word. Little recked that holy man of the Oliphants or any Scots name, with their pride and their clan-ships. What he meant was the man's wife and his bairns—and no a distant cousin twenty times removed."

"No more than three times, minister," said Pate; "make me not out more loon than laird. And as she's her father's daughter, and he so old a man, she is of the elder generation, my father's second cousin, and no more than second cousin once removed to me. And what could be nearer my own house than that? Nay, the holy man, as you say—I wot not how to call him—would e'en have been of my mind."

"Paul he was, and not always favourable to Peter," said Melville, shaking his head, yet with a tremulous smile on his face. "Pate, I will ask you but one thing. Is it for the hope of this maiden's love that you take up her forlorn cause?"

"Maister Melville," said Pate, "I ken not if I love her; but reason

none have I to think that she has ever wared a thought on me. There is clear in my mind the danger, and mostly the certainty, that she will mate with some stranger and carry the auld house into another name,—the whilk would be bitter to me—more bitter than words can say."

"If it is so," said the minister, "then the Lord bless you, my lad, Pate. Laird or no laird, you are a true man, and that's better than rank or high degree."

"You mind, minister," said Pate, with a smile, "*Aw toutt pourvoirs*—you were the first to learn me what its meaning was."

"I was ever a fool," said Melville, "and ever will be! It is not that kind of lesson that makes a man win lairdship and land."

"But it is maybe the best consolation when he has to bide without them," Peter said.

They had come in their walk within sight of Kellie Castle, which stood square and strong, rising with its turrets to the sky from amid the peaceful fields, as it still stands undismayed by all the progress of the centuries. It is a little grim and grey in the darkness of its stone walls now-days, all Scotland having been seized since then with that false reserve which discredits colour; but in these days, no doubt, much of the rough mass, especially in its out-buildings, must have shone in white or yellow, the old tints, weather-stained and glorious, which the country then loved. Pate looked towards that home of his fathers, lifting once more the bonnet from his brow. It had been a kind of idol to him throughout his youth, his every hope had centred in it; it had been his ambition, the desire of his heart—not an ignoble one. He looked upon it now with a smile full of

sorrow and disappointment, and a thought, had he known it, higher than any other hope that had ever before centred upon Kellie. If it were won for her, then would it be well lost.

"Fare thee weel, auld Kellie," he said with a half laugh to hide that tremor; "thou wilt never be to me or mine; and I have glowered at thee, and longed for thee all my life long: which maybe you will say, minister, is just a judgment on me for a covetous thought."

"You will never hear such a word from me, Pate, my man," said the minister. "I have more opinion, if I dare to say it, of your good Lord and mine."

He, too, lifted his hat in reverence as he spoke, and after a moment both turned away.

"After all," said Master Melville, "this is not the subject on which I sought you in haste, my lad, Pate. I hear that yonder wild lassie, hot with her race and her youth, is for defending the auld Castle by force of arms. She will call out every Oliphant in the Kingdom of Fife, you the captain: she will fill the stores with provender, and furbish up the auld armour, and hold the place against lord and loon. It's over the whole country-side already, and the lads at St Monance all allow. There needs but a spark to fall, and there will be a blaze to light up Fife. Pate, do you think what that would be? Two whole parishes put to the horn. The men, that are the breadwinners, in prison or hounded out of the land. The women helpless with their bairns; the boats all useless on the shore, the plough in the furrow. Ever have I learned you, Pate Oliphant, that a man's first thought should be for them about him that are in want of good guiding and help to do well. You

cannot stand against the law. You cannot stand against the chief of your name, that has riches and troopers at his command (though well I wot he is a wastrel, and his son after him). Mistress Jean, she is but a bairn. The right and the wrong have gone to her head, and of the consequences she takes no thought. Vain to speak till her of ruined houses and men slain or banished. She just thinks of victory and the three silver crescents waving over Kellie, and the tyrant driven away. As if she was a queen fighting for her crown—and, waes me! we have well known in this generation what comes of that."

Pate had walked on by the minister's side, silent, his head bowed, listening. He looked up hastily, interrupting—

"A princess; but with more right than the law, and more innocence than that gowan-flower. There is no similitude."

"Nor am I making any comparisons, Pate Oliphant," said the minister with a smile; "but what is all that," he cried, as a sound as of shouting and tumult came to them over the cliffs on the breeze which is always fresh (or salt as the case may be) blowing off the Firth over the Fife braes.

They had walked far in their talk, and were now near the old village of St Monance, with its old kirk dating from the days of King David, that "sore sanct for the crown." The sound evidently came from that quarter, and both the men quickened their steps accordingly. The village consisted then, as now, of a straggling line of red and moss-grown cottages, parallel—if any parallel could be to a coast cut up in zigzags by the line of rocks—with the margin of the sea. It was entirely a fisher village, the boats drawn up high

in the rocky openings of the beach, almost on a level with the houses, and nets spread everywhere, drying, or mending, or being baited at every point. But in the centre of the "toun," where the space between the houses and the sea was a little wider, was a little crowd of fishermen, their dark figures lighted up by a touch of brighter colour in a kirtle or petticoat, and the white specks of the mutches which every decent woman wore. They were all circling round a gayer figure in their midst, Mistress Jean to wit, uplifted on her pony, with her hair flowing under her riding-cap, the highest light in the picture, as her delicate face was, among all the ruddy, weather-beaten, glowing countenances round. Jean had, it was evident, been making something like an oration to her assembled vassals, and, her eyes shining, her hair waving, her arm in the air, had kindled the fishers to enthusiasm. "We are Oliphants all," she was saying as the minister and Pate came up, "every one kin, far off or near: and hey for the silver crescents and bonnie Kellie Castle, that never owned master since the days of Bruce but——" she stopped with the pause of natural eloquence as her kinsman pushed into the crowd: then waving her whip, cried with all the force of her young voice, and a daring which brought the blood to her cheek, "Pate Oliphant's line, and mine."

Never was a touch more effective. As he pushed forward, scarcely hearing what she said, there rose a general shout, "Pate Oliphant and the bonnie Leddy; Leddy Jean and the kind house o' Kellie! We're for them and nae land-louper. The Bruce's blood and the auld name!"

"Mistress Jean," said Pate,

"what do ye here? This is no court of law, to judge between you and him that, right or wrong, is no land-louper, but the head of our name."

"Land-louper yourself, Pate Oliphant!" cried Jean, in high indignation. "Let go my bridle! If you will not tell the lads, what is left to me but to do it? and you, if you will not speak, be silent, sir! for though I do you all honour, and name you with myself, you are but my vassal like the rest, and that you ken!"

Pate's bonnet was in his hand, and he bowed low; but he held her bridle without flinching, though pony and rider both rebelled. "It is not safe for a spiritry creature like this," he said, "the roaring of those loons so near her lug. Silence, lads! The lady understands, without more of your rowting, that you're all leal, and her friends."

The men had slunk a step backward in dismay at what seemed to them a family quarrel. They brightened again, and answered, "Ay, that are we!" "To our last drap o' blood!" "And your's too, Maister Pate!"—with a subdued clamour, daunted by his look, for he was not a man to trifle with, as they knew.

"My bonny bairn," Mr Melville was saying at the other side, "if you will curb your pony to an auld man's pace, I would fain go with you. There's danger baith for man and beast here."

"And what do I care for danger?" cried Jean; "it's just half the pleasure. Bid Pate Oliphant let go my bridle. Do you think, me that am 'most in arms for my rights, I will be guided by him?" She touched the excited pony with her whip, which made a bound, scattering the fisher-folk. But not Pate, who, setting his teeth, and

digging his heels into the earth, held her with a grasp of iron. Jean had the whip raised again, with the intention, it seemed, this time, of striking him, when the minister called out to her—

"Slip down, lassie! the little beast is wild wud; she'll dash you against the rocks; she'll have your brains out: slip down, slip down, and you'll take little harm."

"Leddy, ye canna haud her a minute longer," cried a fisher—one rushing on each side to pluck her from her saddle. But the girl blazed over them, her hair waving in their faces, her blue eyes darting fire.

"Away!" she cried. "Away! Hold off! She may master you and me, but she'll not master Pate!"

CHAPTER VIII.

There ensued after this a very dark time in the life of Peter Oliphant of Over-Kellie. When Jean found that not she, any more than the pony, could master Pate, she withdrew altogether her favour and friendship from him. Shut up within the old house, which Lord Oliphant after that one demonstration of taking possession left unvisited, she passed the lingering spring and summer, often seen about the country roads on her pony, but keeping up a seclusion within, quite uncongenial to her temper, and which even Margaret from Over-Kellie was not allowed to break. The suit at law, brought before the courts by her kinsman and next friend on her behalf as a minor,—that Sir Walter's will might be set aside as barred by her right of succession, and also as procured by undue influence, when in his age and weakness he was no longer able fully to exercise his faculties,—excited for a moment her hottest wrath. She burst forth upon Maister Melville, who gave her the information, with blazing artillery of looks and words, of which he avowed that could the first have slain him he would now have been a lost man. But the mild divine, being full of experience and observation, believed he saw behind all this fury a certain

exultation. "How daured he, after denying me, and contradicting me, and leaving me here to eat my heart, while he went off to his plough, the dastard, no to answer his lady's call! And I doubt not he's laying his furrows and sowing his grain as if there was no such person as Jean Oliphant shut up in Kellie," the girl cried, glowing with rage and curiosity and eagerness. "You can tell him that it's he that is the land-louper, and no credit to his gentle blood, to turn his back on the auld house and upon me."

"No back of his has been turned on any lawful risk," said the minister; "on certain destruction no brave man will run if he is other than a fool. Ken you what your kinsman is doing, Mistress Jean? He is risking his whole living, with the chance of loss that will banish him the country—and that not for himself, as once he thought, but for you."

"Banish him the country!" said Jean, with blanched lips.

"Ay, my little maiden, you ken not either the risk or the pain. You think it is but to out with the flag, and load the arquebus, and the right will prevail; whereas it would be death to many a bonny lad, and destruction to many an

honest house, and no hope to do more."

"All that," she cried, with an impatient wave of her hand, "is over and gone, since he refused and would not stand by me, nor be my captain as I bade him; but to gang to the law is one thing and be banished the country is another. And who would banish him the country for standing by his—next friend? if that is what you call it," she added, in a subdued voice.

The minister smiled within himself to see how swiftly she had accepted the position, notwithstanding her first revolt; but he proceeded to explain to her that the law cost much siller, and Peter had little but his land and his old house; and if the plea lingered long—as it might well do—till all his money was spent, there would be nothing for him when he had secured a living for his mother but to quit Scotland, either for the foreign wars, like so many of the Scots, or to sail away to one of the New-found-lands over the seas, where folk said there were estates for the asking, a fine callier climate, none of your tropiques, a new Scotland cold but fair. And then Jean wept, and declared that she would not have it, that no man should risk life or land for her cause: and afterwards dried her eyes and waved her golden locks, and declared that it was even like him, just like what was to be looked for from Pate, and showed that he was the maist fulish lad in all the land, as she had always said. But even after this she would not come forth nor make friends, though Margaret, when next she came to the Castle gate, was brought up to the hall, and many kisses passed between the girls, and still more kind words.

The cause was heard, by good

fortune, with less delay than was feared, and it was thought at first with much prospect of success. Pate himself, being anxious, made more than one visit to Edinburgh, which indeed was a journey in those days.

But, alas! there was no longer any occasion for hope, when one day in July when the sun was at its hottest, and the genial earth warm through and through, and the corn turning red against the blue of the sea, as I saw it but the other year, glowing as if it would take light and flame—Pate Oliphant, just come back, and weary with the journey, stood hard by his own hall-door, leaning upon the wall, his bonnet low on his brow, and his heart full of trouble. He had flung out of the big room from his mother's questions and his sister's outcries of sympathy and distress, feeling that he could not bear even the sympathy, much less the questions: how was this, and how was that? when all he could tell or think of was just that the cause was lost. Oh, easy enough to see how it was, if they would but think, instead of asking questions! My Lord Oliphant had friends enow; he was a lord of King James's Court; he was sib to all the nobles, and even to one of those carles on the judges' bench, with their muckle wigs and their weariful tongues. A losing litigant is prone to be doubtful of the impartiality of the law. Pate Oliphant could not but feel that, had he been Oliphant of Kellie (as he ought to have been), any suit of his would have been more safe to end as he wished.

He was standing there, idly lashing the air with the riding-switch that was still in his hand, his bonnet low on his brow, and his heart in his bosom, when there

came suddenly into the silence of the afternoon a sound of horse's hoofs at the gallop on the rough road that led to the house. Margaret, who had come out after her brother, cried out with a start, "Hear till her! It is Jean's powney, the little wild beast—wild like her mistress. It's our Leddy Jean."

"Leddy, puir lassie!" cried the Mistress; "no more Leddy, if a' be true, Margaret, than you or me."

"And even so worthy of the more respect," cried Pate, rousing from his despair. There was no mistaking the break-neck gallop, which seemed to join the two, pony and girl, in one personality. Jean's one idea now, clearly told by every flying beat of the hoofs upon the road, was a fiery desire to get there, to fling herself upon the protection or sympathy of her friends. Pate flung his bonnet on the ground, and hastened to throw open the gate, receiving her with uncovered head and reverential gesture, as if she had been a queen. But Mistress Jean, in hot haste, too impetuous to pause, flashed past him like a gleam of sudden light—her golden locks flying, her complexion bright with haste and excitement. She drew up before the door, and flung herself from the pony's back without waiting for any aid. "They have come, they have come!" she cried, with only breath enough to say the words. She was so keen, however, to tell her story, that the immediate painful meaning of it was lost in eagerness. "Here am I, flung upon you like a stone, fired out upon you like a bullet out of a gun," she cried, with a laugh of excitement. "O Pate Oliphant! if ye would but have done it, you and me would have been in harness this

day, and the silver crescents flying out-owre the grey wall! for they are come—they are come!"

"The silver crescents," said Pate, "are their cognisance as well as yours and mine: and they have won the day."

"Listen to me," cried Jean, shaking her half-curved locks about her ears, her eyes blazing, her countenance, in her excitement, undimmed. "I was sitting quiet in the great window, thinking no harm, when in a moment there arose sic a tumult as if a hail army had broken in; and before I could say more than a word to old Marjory, there they were, bursting up ilka stair, some from the west tower, some from the south, with a clatter of rapiers by their side, and spurs on their heels—the villain sound," she cried, "and them no better than reivers upon a poor maiden—but notwithstanding," she added, pausing with a sigh, "a bonnie noise!" She cast a sudden glance at Pate, standing there in the dust of his journey, the sun shining on his bared head. He had no swingeing rapier, but a whinger in his belt and a spur on his heel, for use and not for show, a subdued figure, not like the gallants in their bravery. He felt this glance to the bottom of his heart, divining something of it, but not Jean's instant second thought, that not one of them, fine as they might be, was such a bonnie lad!

"I am telling ye," cried Jean, renewing her tale with a flush upon her cheeks which came from her own consciousness of that thought, "that they all burst in in a moment, men's voices, and the jingling and the clattering of them, that filled the hall. It is well for me that I never stop to think, as the Mistress says; for if I had stoppit, or thought, or lingered a

moment, I would have been in their hands, the popinjays! and no time for parley. I just flashed up 'most before I saw them, divining in my heart; and slip-pit behind the curtain that is over yonder sma' door, Margaret, you will mind? I just lingered to see that it was safe, and heard their outcry, 'Where is she?' and 'Call forth the leddy,' which proved they had not seen me—though one cried there was some person gone forth, and another that he had heard a step—which was a muckle lee, whoever told it," cried Jean, pausing in her childish sense of triumph yet injury; "you ken whether I have a foot like a trooper, to be heard among armed men."

"Thus I got to the stable," she went on, "like an arrow from a bow: and Jaicque, who is faithful, and me, that have saddled her many a day, we got on her gear before you could turn round, and away by the back of the outhouses, and the bridle-path by Kellie Mill, and never a soul to hear us or see us, all the gaping fools about being out to see the gallants' train. And here I am," she cried, suddenly pausing and looking round. Up to this moment her tone had been almost joyous, her bearing almost gay, in the heat of excitement and novelty, which were life to this young creature. She stopped, and her countenance changed. She looked round upon them—the Mistress at the stair-head wringing her hands, the young master of Over-Kellie standing at the pony's head, with a sobered wistful look of discouragement and downfall, nobody, as it seemed, sympathetic but Margaret, who, excited like herself, half crying, half laughing, had clasped the hands which still held the bridle, caressing them in the absence of other means of showing

her pity and her love. "Now I am here," repeated Jean, slowly, a sudden cloud of surprise and dismay sweeping over her, "but you are not glad to see me. O Pate Oliphant, Pate Oliphant, take your hand from my bridle! Next of kin you may be, but no next of heart!"

"You silly lassie!" cried the Mistress, taking, though she was a little timid and cautious in her elder days, but two steps down the four stairs.

If I had space I would tell how Jean came to understand the saddened looks of her next of kin, and how Pate discovered that no popinjay of them all was in her eyes half the man that he was, though he had refused to take up arms or spend men's lives in a hopeless cause. They had to subdue their pride to the acceptance of their fate, which was much harder upon Peter Oliphant—born, you would have said, to no better—than on Mistress Jean, though her proud cousins called her no more than the Gudewife of Over-Kellie, scorning her blood and her rights. But the family kept their homely life there unbroken for many generations, keeping up the old name and kindly tradition long after the Lords Oliphant, though this is no brag of a child of Over-Kellie, but a sad saying, were, like the Flowers of the Forest, a' wede away. There was another lawsuit, of which no better came; but Peter Oliphant of Over-Kellie, though no more than a bonnet laird, no doubt, "with his bairns and his oyes all around him, oh," came to be more or less a contented man. He knew French to a certain degree, as has been said, thanks to Maister Melville, whose breeding and education had been much in foreign

countries; and though he pronounced it like good broad Scots, and was no professor for the grammar, here is this little composition of his in that language, beaten out as he went about his fields through many a quiet day, and pondered his life and the life of man in the long silence of the years. *À tout pouvoir* had been the proud device of his youth, when everything seemed within his power; but this was what he put into that old tongue of gallant device as the burden of his age, with the accent of Scotland and of long life—

“Ayant pourvu
Autant qu’a pu,
 quoth Pate.”

And may we all say as much, however humbly, his descendant prayeth, at the end of the dim valley from whence begins to glow

over the dark braes the rising of a better sun.

[The Lord Oliphant, perhaps harshly treated above, was a man of many troubles and difficulties, much like those of Sir Walter of Kellie, whom he succeeded. He, too, died with no son to follow, and would have passed over his daughter; and a romance of mingled lawsuits and royal interference might well be made out of his history and that of his successors—but this must be for another hand. As dates are the useful things that are most apt to fail in family tradition, I do not attempt to say which of his successors sold Kellie Castle—to them a useless and unnecessary burden, though so dear to those who lost it—to the family of Erskine, who took from it in later days a title, and made it their home.]

THE GROWTH OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE.

RECENT events have brought the question of what is called "world-empire" into prominence. They have also shown very clearly that foreign Governments and the foreign press, at least so far as it is inspired, regard the fabric of British power with considerable jealousy and vexation. Whether foreign peoples who are admitted to citizenship and trade in our colonies on equal terms with British subjects show that jealousy to anything like the same extent is not so clear. The sentiment is quite natural. Nations with increasing numbers are forced to look for settlements abroad, and wherever they seek them they find the ubiquitous English present with claims and interests, and probably in physical possession. The colonial world is only open to them under the British flag. The remarkable telegram of the German Emperor to the President of the Transvaal Republic was simply an impulsive and unguarded betrayal of this sentiment. It was undignified, because it betrayed the weakness of his position as compared with his aspirations. So far as it was capable of being taken seriously, it was a challenge to Great Britain to defend her rights, and at the first symptom of a determination to do so Germany was compelled to retreat, and then discovered that, so far from improving her position in South Africa, she had considerably weakened her influence in Europe. The President's guarded reply and the censure of Germans in South Africa were not an encouraging reception abroad. In Europe, the refusal of Portugal to allow German marines to traverse her African

territory, the undisguised distrust on the part of Austria and Italy as to the continued stability of the Triple Alliance in the face of such ill-advised demonstrations, the impressive warnings indirectly conveyed by Prince Bismarck, and the refusal of the German people to be hurried into colonial enterprise and naval developments,—are all of them a striking indication that Germany's hour has not yet come as a candidate for world-empire.

Germany is absolutely without a past in that respect. Her achievements have been exclusively European, and two centuries have seen her grow from an insignificant electorate to her present local predominance by the process of absorption and by land struggles of a purely military character. Her relations to Great Britain have been such that, except for the very recent development of colonial jealousy as regards South Africa, there has been no serious cause of difference between them. In many respects our interests are identical. We regarded her growth in empire and power as a guarantee of European peace, and the establishment of the Triple Alliance as an additional security in that respect. Her preoccupations in Europe, with two great military empires alongside the whole of her eastern and western boundaries, are so vast that it is only by universal conscription and by defensive alliances that she can fulfil the duty of self-preservation. To quote language said to be inspired by Prince Bismarck, on the lines of his great speech of February 1888:—

"The chief task of German policy, in the immediate future as in the

past, will be to secure peace and the undisturbed development of the country at home. Enterprises abroad, such as France has often undertaken in order to flatter her national vanity and to serve a lust of conquest or to distract public attention in the interests of a Government, do not harmonise with the principles by which German policy must be guided at all times if it is not to degenerate."

Obviously the British Government is not called upon to recognise Germany as a rival in competition for leadership in the world beyond the ocean. And as regards the respective capacities in that direction of the British and German people, it is worth while to quote Vienna opinion, as expressed by the 'Times' Austrian correspondent of January 16:—

"The English are not as weak nor the Germans as omnipotent as we in Austria-Hungary generally imagine. The Germans cannot touch the British colonial empire, nor are they capable of creating one like it. Such a gigantic task can only be accomplished by a nation educated under liberal institutions and by a people whose might is derived from energy, independent individuality, a spirit of enterprise emancipated from all tutelage, and the personal initiation of the citizens themselves. It is true that the Germans have obtained several concessions of land in Asia Minor. Their embassy knows how to convert the prestige of their immense army into solid cash, and their merchants also know how to turn it to account by constantly appealing to their consul. Englishmen are made of different stuff. When they are advised to address themselves to their consul, they refuse to do so, and rely for success upon their own resources. As regards colonisation and the cultivation of unexplored country, the Germans are mere children. They may brag, but they are nevertheless guided by

the official hand, and cannot be compared to the free Englishman, who is independent, seasoned by the experience of three centuries, and who has braved all the seas and all the latitudes of the globe."

No one can say that British absorption in their colonial and Indian and maritime empires has anything to do with national vanity or ulterior motives. Those empires have their main root and origin in these islands, and it is impossible to imagine "the undisturbed development of the country at home" without reference to its vast interests abroad. Those empires have struck their roots all over the world, and deep in the history and achievements of three centuries. The fabric which has been raised is unique in the world's history. It cannot be shattered without consequences which the whole race would feel, and there is no other Power with resources sufficient to step into our place and carry on the responsibilities which we have undertaken. If our position excites jealousy and vexation, reflection brings with it the conviction that British power cannot be displaced, at least until the British race has degenerated, and that if it could, the possible advantages to other nations are not apparent or easily discernible.

The present is at least a favourable opportunity for considering how this stupendous fabric of empire has grown up. Opportunely, there have been issued from the press two books of unusual learning and ability, which deal at least indirectly with this subject. Professor Burrows,¹ of Oxford, has given an account of the history of British foreign policy—that is, of the continued

¹ *The History of the Foreign Policy of Great Britain.* By Montagu Burrows. W. Blackwood & Sons, Edinburgh and London.

development of British interests in foreign parts. It is an extremely interesting work, well thought out, and compressed into a well-proportioned narrative. Professor Seeley,¹ of Cambridge, has left behind him for posthumous publication a valuable work on the growth of British foreign policy. It is a work much fuller in detail than Professor Burrows', but it is rather in the nature of a series of disjointed sketches not finally worked up into a harmonious whole. Taken in conjunction with his 'Expansion of England' and his 'Short Life of Napoleon,' the last named being a most valuable work, the three books have done more to give the general reader an insight into the mode in which the marvellous fabric of the British empire has grown up than any other books in popular use.

The main interest in all recent British history, more particularly as that history bears on international politics at the present day and the national duties abroad, lies in the answer to the question, How was it that half an island over which Queen Elizabeth ruled developed into the world-wide empire over which Queen Victoria reigns? First and foremost it must be referred to the qualities of the race, their energy and adventurous spirit, their capacity to colonise, to rule subject races, and to administer their affairs. That race was sprung of successive seafaring invaders of these islands, who were trained for generations in the arduous defence of these shores, and taught to achieve naval superiority as a necessity of their position. As early as Edward III. the sovereignty of the narrow seas was asserted, and

conceded as a matter of course by the people of the Low Countries. As centuries rolled on, the insularity of our position became more marked as our possessions in Europe dwindled away. The drill-sergeant, who is the artificer of German fortunes, has had no ascendancy in these islands, whose preoccupations have not arisen from military empires on their boundaries. Naval superiority has been the guarantee of our shores, and at the same time the foundation of an empire which has grown up beyond the seas. The same qualities which achieved ordered liberty at home spread commerce, settlements, and empire abroad.

At the present day, besides predominance in the seas, which is secured not merely by superiority in ships but by command of the strong places and harbours of the world, like Gibraltar, Malta, and Cyprus in the Mediterranean, and of coaling-stations and naval harbours all over the world, there are four great groups of colonies—the Dominion of Canada, the West India Islands and contiguous territory in Central and Southern America, a mass of South African possessions, and the Australian group. Ten millions of British-born subjects inhabit these colonies, and own allegiance to the Queen. To them must be added the vast dependency of India, which contains a fifth of the whole human race.

This vast empire, which it seems is to be menaced by a telegram and arraigned by a Power without a navy or a dependency worth mentioning, dependent on conscription and allies for the continued safety of its own borders, is the growth of

¹ Growth of British Policy. By Sir J. R. Seeley. In 2 vols. Cambridge University Press.

three centuries of determined and unrelenting effort, during which our forefathers have struggled against the hostility of the world. The three greatest potentates of modern times have been its strenuous antagonists—viz., Philip II., Louis XIV., and Napoleon. Of these three Napoleon was the most powerful, Philip the most deadly. The leaders under whom the English rallied against these world-famous monarchs were, first, Elizabeth and Drake; second, William and Marlborough; third, Pitt and Nelson. The result of the first of these great historic duels was to overturn the foundations of Spanish empire, with its dominion over the seas, its vast colonial possessions, its claim under a Papal bull to an exclusive monopoly of the New World. The result of the second was to decide which should be the residuary legatee of the deceased Spanish Power, France or England; giving in the end the succession to its Old World dominions to France, its trade, maritime supremacy, and colonies mainly to England. The result of the third was to shatter Napoleon's hopes of ascendancy by sea, and to force him back on European conquests, upon projects which related to the Old World and not to the New. Pitt and Nelson did not disappear till that end was attained; and England's part in the later wars of Napoleon was that, having, as Pitt said in almost his closing words, saved herself by her energy, she saved Europe by her example and assistance.

The way in which victory was secured against these powerful antagonists, and in which all competitors of empire were distanced, is best appreciated by dividing the three centuries which elapsed from the death of Queen Mary in 1558 to the proclamation of Queen

Victoria's sovereignty over India in 1858, into three divisions—the first, from the accession of Elizabeth to the death of Queen Anne, during which England expanded into the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and laid the foundations of empire; the second, between the death of Queen Anne and the battle of Waterloo, during which a long contest was successfully maintained against France for ascendancy in America and India, and the empire rose from its foundations; the third, during which it has been extended, increased, and consolidated.

Perhaps the lowest point which the English fortunes ever reached was during the closing years of the reign of Queen Mary, just before we embarked upon the career which has embraced the whole world for its theatre. Seeley describes that reign to be the period of a Habsburg invasion and conquest. England was during that reign from almost every point of view a Habsburg kingdom, standing on the same level as the Low Countries. Mary was half a Spaniard by blood; with her Spanish mother and husband, and in her religion, she was wholly a Spaniard in feeling. Philip was monarch of half the world. Half an island, more or less, was no great addition to his empire, and was regarded as a mere appendage, though of course a valuable one. Had Catholicism and the Habsburg interest become permanent by the birth of a son to Philip and Mary, the stake, the scaffold, and the long purse of the rich Spanish monarchy would have prostrated England to a degree from which it could not have been rescued without an appalling struggle. Yet a century and a half later the Power which arrests the attention of the civilised world is that of

Great Britain, with Spain for ever distanced in the competition, and France gradually compelled to accept a secondary and declining place in the struggle for ascendancy in the New World.

The growth of foreign policy means the growth of the spirit and aims which predominate in a nation's management of its affairs in foreign parts. Viewed in this light, the broad distinction between the position of England relatively to the world at large, between the reign of Mary and the close of Anne's reign, was that at the latter date it had grown to be a great commercial State, regulating its relations to other countries in the interests of its trade—that is, in what was regarded as the national interest. In the earlier period English international trade was small, and her manufactures in their infancy. While international trade was conducted along the highway of the Mediterranean, England was out of it. The enormous progress made was due to four great events—England's disentanglement from all dynastic connections with Europe, effected by the death of Mary and the policy of Elizabeth; the growth of union between England and Scotland; the discovery of the New World, and the substitution of the Atlantic for the Mediterranean as the highway of commerce; our increasing insularity and security from invasion, which gave to the British people better opportunities than their rivals for sustained efforts in the direction of ships, colonies, and commerce.

The point of time at which England began to break away from the Old World and to launch forth in her career over the oceans and the New World was the accession of Queen Elizabeth. During her reign

of nearly half a century all the impulses to that career were created and fostered. The first act of the Queen was to reject Philip's offer of marriage—an offer made six weeks after her accession. Thereby the rent made by Mary's death in the Habsburg net, in which England was enmeshed, was completed. England was rescued from the position of being an integral part of the Spanish empire, to be guided for all time by the Papacy and the Inquisition. A legacy of hate had been bequeathed by the former reign towards Spain and her vulnerable empire beyond the seas. A strong rivalry between France and Spain proved our security from external attack for thirty years. The public recoil from dynastic influences, from being transferred from one sovereign to another as a marriage dowry, as appurtenances to a royal estate, proved our security from within. The English people were conscious that they had only just escaped the yoke of the Habsburg tyranny; the Scottish people felt that they were, through French intermarriage, fast becoming a province of France. National policy was closely connected with the religious movement. After considerable vacillation and uncertainty, both countries threw themselves strongly on the side of the Reformation, regardless of the reaction on the Continent in favour of Catholicism which followed the Council of Trent. Elizabeth, whatever her private convictions, had, as the child of Anne Boleyn, no alternative but to stand forth as the leader and representative of the joint devotion of both countries to the cause of the Reformation; and in so doing, and by abstaining from marriage, represented a national policy freed from all those dynastic influences which overwhelmed or aggrandised

Continental nations. Eventually England and Scotland were united under one crown by hereditary succession. But by calling out a joint Reformation party in joint resistance to the Spanish Habsburgs and the French Valois, Elizabeth laid the foundation of a durable union between the two nations, and founded Great Britain. The birth of Great Britain dates from that period.

For down to this period England and Scotland had confronted each other like two barbaric tribes at eternal blood-feud—the one in alliance with France, the other latterly with Spain. Elizabeth was wholly English, took up the position of an exclusively national sovereign, refused a foreign husband; the Queen of Scots was French by extraction and marriage, and, moreover, was in opposition to the new religious movement in her dominions. The Treaty of Edinburgh expelled the French from Scotland. In the first four years of the queen's reign both England and Scotland in their different ways became staunchly Protestant, and a powerful Huguenot party arose in France. Elizabeth having rescued herself from the sole dynastic connection in which the country was involved, recognised that her only friends were the Scotch Calvinists, the English reformers, the French Huguenots, and the Low Country insurgents, and acted accordingly. Whatever her real feelings towards either reformers or rebels, she recognised that neither in Catholicism nor in crowned heads would she find any security for her throne. Accordingly, her real contribution to the growth of the British empire was that for forty-four years she established the insularity of England by preserving the country from all European entanglements,

and allowed her people to indulge to the full the spirit of wild adventure which the discovery of a New World had called forth. The fusion of the English and Scotch people proceeded under the influence of religion, and during the last thirty-six years of her reign a child was growing up in Protestant hands who represented in his own person the eventual amalgamation of the Crowns of the two islands. The French and Scottish alliance gradually gave way to an English and Scottish fusion, and Great Britain with a British dynasty replaced England as the Power with which foreign nations had to deal.

The Britannic idea was a necessary preliminary to the idea of a world-empire. Once become a reality, it was gradually and continuously developed. Its antagonism to the reviving power of Catholicism, and to the overweening ambition of Philip II., was a principal source of its vitality and vigour. Founded upon Protestantism, individual liberty, opposition to the dominant principle of the Catholic Powers that no heretic could wear a crown, it was fostered by Elizabeth's policy of peace, of non-intervention as far as possible in the affairs of other countries, of abstinence from the more acute forms of political or religious repression. Till the Spanish Armada, that policy succeeded. The same efforts to put down heresy, which made the Low Countries the scene of some of the greatest horrors which Europe has ever witnessed, and France the scene of the Massacre of St Bartholomew, resulted in England only in the Rising of the North, the Pope's Bull of Excommunication, and the treason and execution of the Duke of Norfolk. This comparatively undisturbed security re-

sulted from the rivalry between France and Spain and that masterly inactivity of Elizabeth which, based as it appears to have been on settled policy, was, in fact, the dominant factor of the period.

During this period of peace the Union between England and Scotland was growing. So also was commerce. And the closely guarded New World of Spain was pierced again and again by Hawkins, Drake, and the growing nautical chivalry of England. This lawless privateering was a direct challenge to the Spanish monarch to make good against these islands his claim to naval and commercial ascendancy, and to the exclusive possession of the New World. To all appearances the struggle was unduly precipitated on our side. Philip at that time, after a period of incessant warfare, held a more formidable position than any potentate has ever done, approaching more nearly to universal empire than any Europe has ever witnessed, except perhaps that of Napoleon. But his zenith was soon passed, and after the Armada he ceased to inspire alarm, while his empire proved to be far advanced in internal decay.

The British empire, on the other hand, was in its earliest infancy. A long peace had developed its resources. The defeat of the Armada inspired it with energy and hope. Our people became busy traders. Flemish traders had been ruined by war, Flemish refugees had flocked into England, and Antwerp, the great port for New World commerce, had been sacked and taken. England succeeded to the trade of which the Dutch had been deprived. Beyond the ocean lay a vast world of wealth, of which Spain united with Portugal claimed the mon-

opoly, thereby excluding English commerce from the larger half of the planet. Systematic violence—that is, the combination of trade with private war—was the only mode in which this monopoly could be attacked. Elizabeth connived at this covert maritime war both before and after the Armada, and the struggles between English traders and Spanish monopolists were far too numerous and important to admit of peace between the two Governments. It was this spirit of commercial adventure, whether it be called piracy or a heroic attempt to rescue the New World from the Inquisition and give it back to the free use of the human race, which was the first step in the development of three colossal growths—British trade, British empire, the British navy.

The fifteen years of Elizabeth's reign which still remained after the defeat of the Armada are an important part of the history of British empire which has not yet been fully written. Spain was not crushed by the destruction of the Armada, but England's naval adventurers had received a stimulus and encouragement to enterprise which might have led to the plunder of the Spanish empire on all continents and oceans, and to the carving a new dominion at once out of its ruins. They did, in fact, continue their unofficial maritime war; but it would have been premature for England at once to have stepped forth to claim as a sort of residuary legatee an empire which had not yet fallen from the grasp of the Spanish monarchy. A new policy, however, in foreign affairs, which eventually became a national policy of trade and colonial expansion, began, and in the course of another century resisted all attempts to divert it

from its aims to those of purely dynastic consideration, and eventually established itself as the exclusive object of British statesmen. Drake was succeeded by Raleigh,—the founder of empire over the sea by the founder of empire over distant and yet unexplored continents. His policy was one of boundless conquest. He railed at Elizabeth's half-measures. It was clear to him that English empire might at once replace Spanish empire by transforming herself into a great military and naval State, and embarking in what might have been an interminable war. But the queen was in favour of peace, and preserving non-intervention by her Government as far as possible. The idea of world-empire was the aspiration of that age. It was realised by later generations, perhaps all the more successfully that the nation was allowed to grow by a process of gradual development to the strength required for the purpose. What was done in Elizabeth's reign was to initiate a great policy of expansion, to shake the maritime power of Spain, but to leave practically untouched for a time her vast colonial empire. That was a sufficient achievement for little more than a generation of men, and it was durable. The close of the Elizabethan age witnessed the union of Great Britain under a united monarchy, with its policy of future expansion distinctly marked out and successfully begun, its spirit of sanguine self-confidence completely evoked. The work of Elizabeth had been to create the monarchy of Great Britain, founding it on the Reformation, to give to it its insular character in its freedom from entanglements with the Powers of the Old World, to launch it forth on its career over the ocean and

the New World as an explorer and coloniser. Whatever the mean-nesses and littlenesses of Elizabeth, these great results were due to her policy, and would not have been achieved if she had acted differently from what she did. There were no great plans or strokes of statesmanship, but there was a steady guiding purpose of peace and abstinence from any Government policy of adventure, and of giving full rein to the impulses of her people by abstaining from any measures of repression. It was the heroic age of the English people, and their sovereign's great merit was to afford to genius its free scope, while it restricted the public action of the State within the limits of prudence and moderation.

With the death of Elizabeth and the decline of Spanish power a new era began. The personal union with Scotland, and the extinction of all disputes about title, confirmed the position which Great Britain had won by personal daring and successful resistance to Spain. France as well as England had escaped the Habsburg net; but the Austrian branch of that family began to alarm Europe, and its chief antagonist was not Great Britain under the Stuarts, but France under the Cardinals. The Stuarts as well as Elizabeth declined the post of Protestant champion, and the duel between France and Germany was not such a matter of life and death to England as had been the contest between Spain and Holland. Foreign affairs were not of so much urgency to James, with an undisputed title to the whole island, as they had been to Elizabeth, with her strongly contested title to half of it. The earlier Stuarts meddled with Europe only out of regard for the Elector Palatine, and did not disdain dynastic connec-

tions,—one matrimonial alliance, that of Charles I. with Henrietta Maria, the daughter of Henry IV., having determined the character of English history for more than half a century. The nation, however, became more intensely Protestant, and eager to force a Protestant policy on its Government. The singular tyranny of Laud, backed by the Crown, carried all the energy of the nation into constitutional struggles at home, and determined efforts to colonise with a view to religious freedom abroad. The contrast between England at the time of the Armada and England during the ascendancy of Puritanism, marks a violent step in the development of an imperial race. The external features of the period are—first, that England, absorbed in her intestine divisions, completes its withdrawal from foreign interference, and Europe, with its international contests, has no leisure or opportunity to influence the insular struggles, whatever their true character may be deemed to be; second, that England has become a maritime State, and instead of trying, as in Elizabeth's time, to force an opening into the ocean and the New World as controlled by Philip, she is now engaged in a rivalry with the Dutch in trade, and in maritime and colonial enterprise. The antagonism to Spain has died away, the rivalry with France has not yet begun. It is the two Protestant Powers of British and Dutch who tore up the bull of Alexander VI., and took open possession of a share in the New World; and Spain indirectly acquiesced in a state of things which she was unable to prevent. At first the Dutch, who, as a land Power, had always been accessible to Spanish invasion, and at the same time could only live by increasing and extending their

trade, far outstripped the English in the energy of their attacks on Spanish monopoly. Stern necessity drove them to it. They attacked the Spanish settlements and founded their trade empire at the expense of Spain. The British preferred, on the whole, the course of establishing settlements in the more northerly territory unoccupied by Spain. While the Dutch in the West and the British in the East made trade and the wealth derived from commerce their chief object, the object of the latter in the West was to make settlements, to establish a home, to dwell where they could practise their religion free from all interference and dictation. Their distinct policy became, shaped as it was by the course of events at home, to found a New England. This gave, as between the British and the Dutch, a character of perseverance to the efforts of the former, who, being insular and not at that time so exclusively devoted to commerce, were less vulnerable than the latter by sea and not at all by land. The Puritan settlers were not guided in their choice of territory by thirst for gain: they wanted to found a nation, to begin again, breaking with the traditions of the past, in a place where neither English law and government, nor the English Church, as directed by Laud, and operating through the Star Chamber, could follow them. The process of settlement was slow, but it was sure; and the spectacle of a fundamental change wrought in the conditions of human life and government across the Atlantic had a powerful influence on the course of politics, both in Great Britain and on the Continent.

The extravagant outburst of Puritanism in the middle of the seventeenth century, besides its influence for generations on the

character of the people, powerfully influenced the course of British history both at home and abroad. It did not have a free vent. It had the force of a torrent, and the attempt to dam it up by a policy of enforced uniformity of religious observance only aggravated the consequences. England at that time was behind the Continent in the matter of religious toleration. In France there was the Edict of Nantes, in Germany the religious peace, in Holland toleration was a necessity of the circumstances. In England alone the option was to fight for it or to quit the country. From the point of view of internal constitutional history this is a period of confused struggles between King and Church on the one hand, the House of Commons and the Puritans on the other,—struggles which settled nothing, and which merely led to the feeling all through the reign of Charles II. that the establishment of military dictatorship was the inevitable result of resistance to the Crown, and that the existence of a standing army was fatal to liberty. The place which these struggles occupy in a more extended view of British destiny, in the growth of a United Kingdom and of a world-wide trade and empire, is that thereby the relations of England, Scotland, and Ireland to each other first adjusted themselves, England becoming the predominant partner, and that the course of events resulting therefrom gave a foretaste of the greatness which the future had in store for us. For, as a result of these struggles, England finally retired from any attempt to establish an ascendancy in Europe either as Protestant leader or as a rival to the leading Power, whether Austria or Spain. The French under Richelieu began the period of French ascendancy,

and for a long time to come English influence, except during a short interval under Cromwell, was a thing of the past as regards Europe. The sovereign could do nothing abroad unless he was supported by Parliament. The inhabitants of these islands were absorbed in a great religious controversy between the Anglicanism of England, the Calvinism of Scotland, the Catholicism of Ireland; and in the escape from it through colonisation. Elizabeth had managed to postpone this controversy. But it now entered England by way of Scotland and Ireland, and got itself mixed up with the controversy between king and Parliament in such way that the king had his reserve in Ireland, while the Parliament drew its strength or some of it from Scotland. A third party arose, which eventually put Cromwell at its head, and overpowered for a time all other combatants; until in 1660 Parliament revived and brought back the king. This third party established England for the only part of its history as a great military State, dominating Scotland and Ireland, and overawing Europe, but with its Parliaments silenced and its people held down by the tyranny of the major-generals who were established in their several districts.

The period was only an episode in the growth of our empire, but it was an important and influential one. Again, as in Elizabeth's time, England stood for a short period with all dynastic ties abroad absolutely dissolved. Foreign policy again became, as it was under the queen, national and not dynastic. Oliver Cromwell, nevertheless, represented imperialism, a military supremacy essentially English, established quite as much by dominating over Scotland and Ireland as over king and Parliament. Great Britain and Ireland for the

first time were fully united, and their resources were in the hands of an experienced statesman and soldier, whose mind, however, was possessed of one idea, the greatness and all-sufficiency of Puritanism and of England as the leading Protestant Power. His wars in Europe were in pursuance of his Protestant policy, and his capture of Dunkirk, as a kind of substitute for Calais, points to his schemes being more connected with European and Old-World predominance than the future which proved to be in store for us has subsequently sanctioned. But although Cromwell was himself absorbed in using his great military power for the succour and promotion of Protestantism abroad, the occurrences of this period materially helped the growth of our trade and maritime and colonial power. Over all the seas the English and the Dutch were in contact. An extraordinary incident in the closing years of the Civil War was that while Parliament had in the earlier period kept control of the fleet, there arose, in the later war, a maritime Royalism, Prince Rupert contending with Blake on the sea, as before with Cromwell on land. Nothing could bring home more forcibly to the English people their growing interest in foreign trade, and in their few colonies, as the disturbance to both caused by Royalist privateers. And, moreover, the Dutch became entangled in this maritime civil war. In 1651 Parliament passed its first Navigation Act, the great legislative monument of this period, which remained substantially in force for two hundred years. This Act, in the language of Seeley, "consummated the work which had been commenced by Drake, discussed and expounded by Raleigh, and continued by others. It completed the apparatus of

our foreign trade by creating an English commercial navy." The effect of it was to exclude the Dutch from the carrying trade of English commodities. Down to that time they had principally supplied the links which bound together the merchants in England, the colonies in America and on the Atlantic, and the factories in India. England by that Act finally committed herself to a seafaring and commercial career. The Act was the first nail in the coffin of Dutch greatness, and in the very next year after it was passed England and Holland were at war. This war led to the establishment of England's naval power. It grew out of the maritime civil war just mentioned. It was one of life and death to the Dutch. The foundation of the navy was laid by the efforts of Drake and his contemporaries in their covert piratical war against Spain. The maritime civil war had threatened English trade from all the Royalist ports, which included several of the neighbouring islands and some in Ireland, and led to a thorough reorganisation of the new Government's navy. Blake expelled Rupert from the narrow seas, and pursued him to the Mediterranean. Great Britain now challenged the great sea Power of the Netherlands, and pitted Blake against Tromp. This is the war by which England "for the first time assumed her modern position as the great trading and maritime Power of the world." She now shook herself free from her commercial dependence on the Netherlands. The naval engagements which took place showed that the two States were pretty equally matched. Tromp, however, was killed, and each combatant retired from the coasts of the other. But the final result was emphatically in

favour of England. The Dutch admirals declared that they would not again go to sea unless the fleet was strengthened with better ships. Mutual jealousies broke out between the seven States which comprised the Dutch provinces. Famine and despair afflicted the Dutch population. They had risen to wealth and fortune during their long land war with Spain, which was vulnerable through her vast colonies and her wealth floating on the seas. In the war with England the positions were reversed. England was still in the main an agricultural country, her northerly colonies were the seat of Puritanism rather than of wealth, and she was not yet in any way dependent like the Dutch on foreign trade. The Dutch fishing and commercial fleets were exposed to the English attack, while the Dutch could not retaliate to an extent which would affect the English welfare. Economically they were at a disadvantage, because they were commercially more developed and at the same time more dependent on their commerce. England was at the height of her naval power, developed through her maritime civil war, as she was at the height of her military power, developed through years of hostile operations by land; and at the same time was not yet hampered by her own wealth or entangled in the intricate machinery of her trade. The Dutch from this time receded in power and importance, and Great Britain distanced her in the growing competition for power beyond the seas. In vain the Dutch concluded a treaty with Denmark to close the Baltic, with its exclusive resources in all the materials necessary for ship-building, against Great Britain. What Seeley calls the Peace of Cromwell followed. The Protector

had heartily disapproved the Dutch war, and resolved to put an end to it; but he did so by imposing humiliating terms and by enforcing claims on Denmark for damages which resulted from their closing the Baltic and seizing English ships. The Cromwellian State, miscalled a Commonwealth, emerged by this peace into a commanding international position, the forerunner of that which Great Britain was to hold after its power and resources had increased by another century of effort. It obtained this premature and passing glimpse or experience of the future owing to the tremendous energy which had resulted from the intensity of its internecine conflicts. It reduced the Low Countries to a sort of dependency, intimidated Denmark, and formed an alliance with Sweden, and constituted itself the leader of a great Protestant Union, whose hand was for the present on the politics of Europe, its boundless future on the ocean and beyond it scarcely as yet discerned.

To quote Seeley's expression, "Cromwell's fabric was extremely ephemeral, but it revealed for the first time the large possibilities of our State. It is a first sketch of the British empire." It foreshadowed the immense greatness which was reserved for Great Britain in a later age. France at this time was depressed by its long wars and civil disturbances. Spain by that time was irrecoverably sunk, and beyond the ocean was in full decline. Portugal had revolted from her enforced union with her, and recovered its old colonial possessions. The Dutch colonial empire declined considerably.

Notwithstanding that Cromwell, backed by Puritan England, was half inclined to summon a great

Protestant Council, declare the Pope to be Antichrist, and open a grand religious war on the Continent, he nevertheless gave an impetus to our maritime and colonial development, not perhaps from settled policy, but because a powerful navy was essential to his European position, and above all to his projects in the Mediterranean. A sudden but unsuccessful descent was made on San Domingo. The schemes of Raleigh are recalled to memory by the expeditions of Blake and Penn, and Jamaica became a permanent acquisition of Great Britain. But his main object was to protest against the bull of Alexander VI., which would have assigned for ever the whole Indies to the rule of the Inquisition.

With the Restoration England ceased to exist as a great military State. The army was disbanded, and the experience of military rule had wrought into the English mind an unconquerable aversion to standing armies, a belief that Parliament cannot be overwhelmed by force without establishing a military tyranny, and that King, Lords, and Commons must stand or fall together. England remained, however, a great and active maritime Power, and, by abdicating the position it had recently acquired in Europe, it was the more at leisure to go where destiny called—over the ocean to the East and West. It ceased to be a military State, for that was a unique episode in its career. The point to which the direction of our growth still continued was towards a complete union between England and Scotland, which took place in Queen Anne's time, and to the assumption at that date of a predominantly commercial character in all its external relations, regardless of dynastic interests, and with a growing indifference

to most matters of purely European importance.

The first visible result of the Restoration, from the point of view of the growth of British empire, was that it placed upon the throne a dynasty which was half French by birth, and wholly French by the habits acquired in a long exile, and which very soon acquired by marriage a close connection with other European States. Accordingly, this period of the later Stuarts was one of temporary reaction from a national policy to one more or less moulded by dynastic or selfish interests of the royal family. The cession of Dunkirk marked the fall of the military State; the retention of Jamaica and the alliance with Portugal, cemented by Charles's marriage, indicated the adoption of Cromwell's maritime policy. But the aggressive policy of Louis XIV. was allowed free scope, and Charles's marriage with Catherine of Braganza confirmed that concert of England with France against Spain which his own French connection suggested. In this way his marriage put an end to any slight chance there might have been of Spanish recovery, and France was left without a rival to establish a vast ascendancy in Europe; and with the rise of France England begins to take a lower place in Europe. Besides, Louis XIV. acquired by his marriage with the Spanish Infanta a claim to succeed to the Spanish monarchy, with its vast and indefinite claims to empire across the seas. The great work of Louis XIV. was the absorption of the Spanish monarchy, an achievement which boded no good to the British empire, still in its early infancy. But jealousy of French destiny was very slow to awaken. The two sea Powers,

England and the Netherlands, were both of them friendly to France, and jealous of, or even hostile to, each other. The feature of this age, regarding it from the point of view of empire, and not of European, or still less of insular, politics, was that during the thirty years between Cromwell's death and the Revolution of 1688 the two sea Powers gradually became alive to their common danger from the growth of France, and gradually replaced their old discords and wars by a common understanding in the presence of a common and overwhelming danger. There was a dynastic connection between the two Powers in the persons of two successive Stat-holders, one of whom married a daughter of Charles I., and the other a daughter of James II. The fall of the House of Stuart in England led to the fall of the House of Orange in the Netherlands, and the restoration of the one led to the restoration of the other. The Dutch failure, in combination with Denmark, to close the Baltic to Great Britain was followed, after a short interval of Dutch dependence on the Protectorate, by the appearance of Charles Augustus of Sweden as the tyrant of the North, inclined to close the Baltic to both sea Powers at once—a matter of life and death to both. The Netherlands and Great Britain were accordingly driven to act together once more in a close alliance, which lasted for a century. It was cemented by the accession of the Dutch Statholder to the English throne, and was the main cause of our own Revolution of 1688, and of the introduction into England of Dutch methods of finance and aims in foreign policy. The Dutch, however, found in the end that their commerce was absorbed and their naval power supplanted by

the British. Great Britain came more and more to the front in the rivalry with France all over the world, in India and in Canada, and on the high seas. Hostility lasted for more than a century: though there were intervals in our wars, there was none in the race which now set in for world-wide dominion.

The first effect of the long hostility between France and England, which dates from the Revolution of 1688, was that France failed in the design of extinguishing Protestantism and re-establishing the Catholic religion under French ascendancy from the Turkish frontier to the farthest limits of England and Scotland. The fall of James II. was the ruin of this scheme. But what is more to our immediate purpose is, that a series of naval victories for the English over the French begins with the battle of La Hogue. The naval superiority of France was at an end before the end of the seventeenth century, and at the beginning of the next the land victories of the Duke of Marlborough helped to place Great Britain in a position of advantage as she began the long struggle for predominance in the world beyond the ocean.

The clear object of England was to forestall invasion by maintaining the balance of power on the Continent, and providing a Channel fleet sufficient to protect British commerce. That commerce had recently grown in the Mediterranean, where the English subdued the North African pirates. At this time, about 1700, the systematic defence of the Mediterranean was first assumed by the British for the advantage of their commerce; and in 1704 Gibraltar was captured, and never afterwards, in spite of long effort, relinquished. The rock of Gibraltar and the

island of Minorca became the regular stations for men-of-war; they cleft both France and Spain in two, by breaking communication between their Mediterranean and their western ports, and they guaranteed to Great Britain the predominance at least in the western portion of that inland sea. This control of the Mediterranean marks a distinct advance in the establishment of the empire. Thus at the beginning of the eighteenth century Great Britain has reached a position in which she claims to be the supreme maritime and commercial Power in the world. In point of colonies she could not at this time compare with either Spain or Portugal. They were but a fringe on the Atlantic coast of North America, a few western islands, and a few factories in India. But they were the offspring, not of marauding enterprise, but of emigration and settlement. The British nation was *bonâ fide* planted on both sides of the Atlantic. As its American territories increased in importance, it became the paramount Power of North America, and established its ascendancy, notwithstanding the mighty viceroynalties of Spain, also in Central America and the West Indian group.

Side by side with the growth of external dominion there proceeded at home the work of consolidation of the United Kingdom; for the two principles, Unionism and Empire, have grown and flourished together, and are now, at the close of recent political contests, recognised as inseparable. Elizabeth had united England and Scotland by a common religion, James by a common monarchy. But at the beginning of the eighteenth century the work of insular settlement seemed as distant as ever. England was Episcopalian,

Scotland was Presbyterian, Ireland was Catholic. Yet the three islands combined: Catholic Ireland helped to expel a monarch because he was Catholic, Presbyterian Scotland co-operated with Anglicanism. Three islands, thus undermined by religious discord, fought side by side against both branches of the House of Bourbon. The cause of it was that the three islands combined to form one trade empire by efforts which began with Drake, and were continued without intermission. Commerce becomes the clue to everything alike in our foreign relations and to the progress of our insular relations. In the interest of trade we went to war to prevent the House of Bourbon from swallowing up the Spanish monarchy with its boundless colonies. The final Union with Scotland was successfully effected on terms of the free admission of the Scottish people into the commerce and colonies of a great trade empire. We made a union with Ireland which did not prosper, for instead of admitting her to a share in our trade, we jealously excluded her and interfered to crush Irish industry. The second revolution, which apparently sprang from hostility to the religious designs of Stuart and Bourbon, ended in establishing a greater commercial State than had ever before existed. With internal difficulties at an end, with characters formed in long and patient constitutional struggles at home, and by dash and enterprise abroad, the British people now made it their object to embrace the globe with their trade, and to scatter their colonies on all the more attractive portions of its surface. They also made their home institutions, their finance, their banks, their currency, and their incorporated companies, in a way suited to com-

mercial purposes, and learnt to regulate their foreign relations by considerations almost exclusively commercial.

It was at this stage that Great Britain closed in the long and deadly rivalry with France for world-empire. France had the start. She deprived Spain of the United Provinces, of Portugal and the Portuguese colonies, and straitened the Spanish boundaries in other directions; and with her long seaboard fronting northwards, westwards, and southwards, and her powerful navy, the succession to the Spanish empire abroad appeared to open to her. France and Spain together closed round our American colonies, and organised an attack on British ascendancy in the Mediterranean. The Seven Years' War, presided over by Chatham, which ended in the cession of French Canada, was contemporaneous with the victories of Clive in India, and the final ejection of the French from what is now our Indian empire. In fact, the contest which decided supremacy in the New World was a great oceanic and New World contest, fought out in America and India and on every sea. Between the Treaty of Utrecht and the battle of Waterloo five great wars arose between England and France, waged in all parts of the globe, particularly in Canada and India, resulting in a huge national debt, but also in a vast commercial and maritime empire. The Treaty of Utrecht marked the beginning of the new era, which was to consist of acquisitions of colonial territories and naval stations by giving to us Gibraltar, Port Mahon, and Acadie. French aggrandisement in general did not rouse the hostility of Great Britain. It was French aggrandisement in special quarters which

was inadmissible. We could not see the House of Bourbon swallow up either the Catholic Low Countries or the American trade, or the colonies which Spain had derived from its own discovery and conquest or through its temporary union with Portugal. The struggle thus was against the old maritime Power of the past in conjunction with the greatest military and naval Power of the present. No doubt it threatened Great Britain with ruin. The prize of this long and desperate war was a world-wide empire and a world-wide commerce. Great Britain began by taking up her position in the Mediterranean. Gibraltar was the first of a series of the strong places of the earth which mark the direction in which British power was established, and in which it must be maintained. Malta, the Cape of Good Hope, Quebec, Madras, and Calcutta followed in due course; and at the present time it would be difficult to name the direction in which Great Britain has neither colonies nor places of strength and arms. As to the ill-success of France and Spain, it may be said that the former lost her colonies in a series of unsuccessful wars, the latter from ceasing to found them, from declining power to maintain her authority over them, and from the revolt of her dependencies, which finally took place at the beginning of the present century.

Vanquished at all points, the French were not without their revenge. After they had been expelled from Canada by our efforts, our American colonists no longer needed the protection of the mother country, and asserted an independence which the French were the first to recognise. The rise of Napoleon renewed the conflict. There seems to be no doubt that his original design, of

which the expedition to the east of the Mediterranean and Egypt were the first symptoms, was to regain for France that ascendancy in the New World and in India from which she had been dislodged. The greatest failure of his whole career, greater even than the failure of his attack on Russia, was the downfall of these, the governing designs of his life. Vanquished at the battle of the Nile, expelled from Egypt and then from Malta, with his naval power crushed at Trafalgar, he was driven back on European conquests, and sought to ruin British commerce by a vast conspiracy of all Europe against her. The result was that the confederacy broke up, and Great Britain found that her commerce could do without Europe better than Europe could do without her. As years went on the struggle ceased to be between Great Britain and France, the final phase was between Great Britain and Napoleon. In the settlement of Europe at Vienna and Paris in 1814 and 1815, Great Britain did not appear as the implacable foe of France, contented so long as she got rid of Napoleon. She insisted on withstanding her dismemberment, recognising it as essential to the balance of power that France should be strong, intent upon securing the safety of her shores, her commerce, and her dependencies.

It is unnecessary to pursue in greater detail the mode in which the empire was built up on the foundations which had been secured at least two centuries ago. We cannot do better than refer the reader to Professor Burrows' book. His 'History of the Foreign Policy of Great Britain' is in reality the history of the growth of empire. He has given a compressed and elaborate account of its continuous development. The scope of his

work may be readily understood by this extract from his preface:—

"This fortress-isle of Britain, safely intrenched by stormy seas, confronting the broadest face of the Continent, and, later on, almost surrounding it with her fleets, was, and was not, a part of Europe according as she willed. First appearing in the dawn of history as the mysterious Ultima Thule, planted somewhere out in the Western Ocean, she grew to observe more and more closely from her watch-tower the strife of the Continent, and, as her expanding interests dictated, to interfere as a belligerent, an ally, or an arbiter. Yet deeply implicated as she became in the Balance of Power in Europe, she never lost sight of her strong position as an extra-Continental Power,—a position which, as her navy, her commerce, and her colonies grew, expanded into that of a world-wide maritime empire. The development, the oscillation, and the reconciliation of these two principles of national policy form the chief elements of the present work."

Our object has been simply to show that this great empire, which has occasioned so much jealousy of late, is not a thing of accident or of mushroom growth. It represents the sustained efforts of ten generations of men and of three centuries of time, in which blood and treasure have been poured forth, in which the utmost energies of the race have been expended. It is an achievement of which English, Scotch, and Irish may be proud, and which Americans, to judge from recent speeches in the Senate, may legitimately claim as redounding to their own credit in the estimation of the world. But, as Lord Beaconsfield impressed upon his countrymen during that struggle over the Eastern Question which it fell to his lot to conduct, it is an empire which has not merely to be enjoyed, it has to be maintained.

Nothing can be more satisfactory than the intense reluctance on both sides of the Atlantic to renew the wars which followed the declaration of independence and the neutrality disputes of 1812, more particularly about a boundary-line not of the first importance, and only capable of being made a *casus belli* if presented for our acceptance at the point of the sword. But it was also of satisfactory import the unanimity with which the inhabitants of these islands rose to resistance at the recent attempt at interference on the part of the German Emperor. It is difficult to understand what could have been intended. During all the long period when Great Britain was striving against Spain, Holland, and France, and building up her empire in spite of them, the Germans were working out their destiny on a smaller scale, and in a mode which never brought them into collision with this country. From an electorate of Brandenburg they struggled into a kingdom of Prussia; and when wiped off the face of the earth by Napoleon, they rose from their ashes with renewed vigour and laid the

foundations of a great empire, and consolidated it at the expense first of Austria and then of France. Great Britain has welcomed its rise as a guarantee of peace, a means of maintaining the balance of European power. It cannot compete with us for world-empire. It comes too late into the field; it has not the preparatory political training; it has other duties to accomplish; and its geographical position forbids it. There has been no want of welcome to her in her African aspirations, and no want of hospitality to such of her citizens as like to settle under the British flag, either at home or in the colonies. The extent to which the display of hostility was recently carried is, we must assume, personal to the Emperor, whose characteristics are well known, and have not yet been controlled by the vicissitudes of a wise experience. We shall not readily believe, unless disabused by the progress of events, that it can be other than a regrettable and ephemeral incident in the relations of long-standing friendship and mutual respect which have hitherto subsisted between the great Anglo-Saxon and Germanic races.

THE FELL SERGEANT.

It is ill enough to have to die in Glenaora at any season, but to get the word for travelling from it on yon trip in the spring of the year is hard indeed. The gug-gug will halloo in your ears to bid you bide a wee and see the red of the heather creep on Tom-an-dearc; the soft and sap-scented winds will come in at the open door, and you will mind, maybe, of a day long-off and lost when you pulled the copper leaves of the bursting oak and tossed them among a girl's hair. Oh! the long days and the strong days! They will come back to you like the curious bit in a tune, that is vexatious and sweet, and not for words or a set thought. You will think of the lambs on the slopes, of the birds tearing through the thousand ways in the woods, of the magic hollows in below the thick-sown pines, of the burns, deep at the bottom of eas and corri, spilling like gold on a stair. And then, it may be, Solomon Carrier's cart goes bye to the town, the first time since the drifts went off the highroad; you hear the clatter of the iron shoes, and your mind will go with him to the throng street where the folks are so kind and so free.

But to turn your back for the last at that time on Lecknamban must come sorest of all. For Lecknamban has seven sheilings hidden in its hills, where the grass is long and juicy, and five burns that are aye on the giggle like girls at a wedding, and the Aora daunders down in front of the knowe, full of fish for the Duke alone, but bonny for earl or caird.

It was in this same glen, in this

same Lecknamban, in the spring of a year, a woman was at her end. She was a woman up in years but not old, a black Bana-Mhuileach who had seen pleasant things and trials like all who come to this queer market-place; but now when the time was come to take the long road with no convoy, only the good times were in her recollection. And though Glenaora was not her calf-country (for she came but a year ago to bide with a friend), she was seawart to turn heel on a place so cosy.

She sat propped up in a box-bed, on pillows, with her face to the open door, and the friendly airs of the country-side came in to stir her hair. With them came scents of the red earth and the grass, birch-tree and myrtle, from the moor. But more than all, they brought her who was at her end a keen craving for one more summer of the grand world. Strong in her make and dour at the giving-in, she kept talking of the world's affairs and foolishness to the folk about her who were waiting the Almighty's will and the coming of the stretching-board. Her fingers picked without a stop at the woolly bits of the blankets, and her eyes were on as much of the knowe below the house as she could see out at the open door. It was yellow at the foot with flowers, and here and there was a spot of blue from the cuckoo-brogue.

"Women, women," she said with short breaths, "I'm thinking aye, when I see the flowers, of a man that came from these parts to Duart. He sang 'Mo Nighean Dubh' in a style was never heard before in our place, and he once

brought me the scented cuckoo-brogues from Aora."

Said the goodwife, "Aoirig, poor woman, it is not the hour for ancient old *sgeuls*; be thinking of a canny going."

"Going! it was aye going with me," said the woman in the bed. "And it was aye going when things were at their best and I was the keener for them."

"It's the way of God, my dear, *ochanie!*" said one of the two Tullich sisters, putting a little salt in a plate for the coming business.

"O God! it's the hard way, indeed. And I'm not so old as you by two or three clippings."

"Peace, Aoirig, heart; you had your own merry times, and that's as much as most of us have claim to."

"Merry times! merry times!" said Aoirig, humped among the bedding, her mind wandering.

Curls of the peat-reek coiled from the floor among the *cabars* or through the hole in the roof; a lamb ran by the door, bleating for its mother, and the whistling of an *uisgeag* high over the grass where his nest lay ran out to a thin thread of song. The sound of it troubled the dying woman, and she asked her friends to shut the door. Now and again Maisie would put a wet cloth to her lips and dry the death-sweat from her face. The goodwife was throng among chests and presses, looking for sheets, shrouds, and dead-caps.

"It's a pity," said she, "you brought no grave-clothes with you from Mull, my dear."

"Are you grudging me yours?" asked Aoirig, coming round from wandering.

"No, nor grudging; fine ye ken it, cousin. But I know ye have them, and it's a pity you should be dressed in another's sewing than your own."

"Ay, they're yonder sure enough: clean and ready. And there's more than that beside them. The linen I should have brought to a man's home."

"You and your man's home! Is it Duart, my dear, among your own folk, or down to Inishail, you would have us take you?"

Aoirig coughed till the red froth was at her lips.

"Duart is homely and Inishail is holy, sure enough, but I would have it Kilmalieu. They tell me it's a fine kirkyard; but I never had the luck to see it."

"It's well enough, I'll not deny, and it would not be so far to take you. Our folk have a space of their own among the MacVicars, below the parson."

The woman in the bed signed for a sip of water, and they had it fast at her lips.

"Could you be putting me near the Macnicols?" she asked, in a weakening voice. "The one I speak of was a Macnicol."

"Ay, ay," said the goodwife; "they were aye gallant among the girls."

"Gallant he was," said the one among the blankets. "I see him now. The best man ever I saw. It was at a wedding——"

The woman's breast racked, and the spume spattered over the home-spun blankets.

Maisie was heating a death-shift at the peat-fire, turning it over in her hands, letting the dry airs into every seam and corner.

Looking at her preparation, the dying woman caught back her breath to ask why such trouble with a death-shift.

"Ye would not have it on damp and cold," said Maisie, settling the business. "I doubt it'll be long in the sleeves, woman, for the goodwife has a lengthy reach."

"It was at a marriage in Glen-

urchy," said Aoirig in a haver, the pillows slipping down behind her back. "Yonder he is. A slim, straight lad. Ronnal, O Ronnal my hero! What a dancer! not his match in Mull. Aye so——"

A foot could be heard on the road, and one of the two sisters ran out, for she knew whom it would be. They had sent word to the town by Solomon in the morning for Macnicol the wright to come up with the stretching-board, thinking there was but an hour more for poor Aoirig.

Macnicol's were the footsteps, and there he was with the stretching-board under his arm—a good piece of larch rubbed smooth by sheet and shroud, and a little hollow worn at the head. He was a fat man, rolling a bit to one side on a short leg, gross and flabby at the jowl, and thick-lipped; but he might have been a swanky lad in his day, and there was a bit of good-humour in the corner of his eye, where you will never see it when one has been born with the uneasy mind. He was humming to himself as he came up the brae a Badenoch ditty they have in these parts on the winter nights, gossiping round the fire. Whom he was going to stretch he had no notion, except that it was a woman and a stranger to the glen.

The sister took him round to the corner of the house and in at the byre door, and told him to wait. "It'll not be long now," she said.

"Then she's still to the fore," said the wright. "I might have waited on the paymaster's dram at Three Bridges if I had ken't. Women are aye thrawn about dying. They'll put it off to the last, when a man would be glad to be taking the road. Who is she, poor woman?"

"A cousin-german of Nanny's,"

said the sister, putting a bottle before him, and whipping out for some bannock and cheese. He sat down on a shearing-stool, facing the door, half open, between the byre he was in and the kitchen where Aoirig was at the dying. The stretching-board leaned against the wall outside.

"Aye so gentle, so kind," the woman in the bed was saying in her last dover. "He kissed me first on a day like this. And the blue flowers from Aora!"

In the byre the wright was preeing the drink and paying little heed to food. It was the good warm stuff they brew on the side of Lochow, the heart of the very heart of the barley-fields, with the taste of gall and peat, and he mellowed with every quaiçh, and took to the soft liltin' of Niall Ban's song:—

"I am the Sergeant fell but kind
(Ho! ho! heroes, *agus ho-e-ra!*);
I only lift but the deaf and blind,
The wearied-out and the rest-inclined.
Many a booty I drive before,
Through the glens, through the glens,
said the Sergeant Mor."

Ben the house the goodwife was saying the prayers for the dying woman the woman should have said for herself while she had the wind for it, but Aoirig harped on her love-tale. She was going fast, and the sisters, putting their hands to her feet, could feel that they were cold as the rocks. Maisie's arms were round her, and she seemed to have the notion that here was the grip of death, for she pushed her back.

"I am not so old—so old. There is Seana, my neighbour at Duart—long past the fourscore and still spinning—I am not so old—God of grace—so old—and the flowers——"

A grey shiver went over her face; her breast heaved and fell

in ; her voice stopped with a gluck in the throat.

The women stirred round fast in the kitchen. Out on the clay floor the two sisters pushed the table and laid a sheet on it ; the goodwife put aside the pillows and let Aoirig's head fall back on the bed. Maisie put her hand to the clock and stopped it.

"Open the door, open the door !" cried the goodwife, turning round in a hurry and seeing the door still shut.

One of the sisters put a finger below the sneck and did as she was told, to let out the dead one's ghost.

Outside, taking the air, to get the stir of the strong waters out of his head, was the wright.

He knew what the opening of the door meant, and he lifted his

board and went in with it under his arm. A wafting of the spring smells came in at his back, and he stood with his bonnet in his hand.

"So this is the end o't !" he said in a soft way, stamping out the fire on the floor.

He had but said it when Aoirig sat up with a start in the bed, and the women cried out. She opened her eyes and looked at the man, with his fat face, his round back, and ill-made clothes, and the death-deal under his oxter, and then she fell back on the bed with her face stiffening.

"Here's the board for ye," said the wright, his face spotted white and his eyes staring. "I'll go out a bit and take a look about me. I once knew a woman who was terribly like yon, and she came from Mull !"

NEIL MUNRO.

ON SOME BOOKS FOR BOYS AND GIRLS.

Most people have probably not forgotten a certain pictorial advertisement highly popular and widely diffused some twenty years ago. Entitled "The Child—What will he become?" it purported to illustrate the potentialities for good or evil latent in the young, and the vast importance of education. It started with the representation of a boy's face in profile, and went on to depict the same countenance at successive stages in a career of learning, industry, virtue, and (of course) pecuniary success, on the one hand, and at the corresponding stages in a career of ignorance, intemperance, depravity, and consequent want, on the other. The idea, if we mistake not, was very happily parodied by Mr Furniss, who with admirable skill and humour traced the development of the boy politician first into a Gladstone and then into a Biggar. But nowadays the question has been to some extent superseded by one equally puzzling: "The Child—What is he?" And indeed the inquiry is one in which every species of man of science, as well as every school of philosophers, has a strong interest to take part. The anthropologist clutches at resemblances between the child and the savage, the biologist at resemblances between the child and the monkey or the oyster. The Darwinian and the follower of Weismann nervously peer for symptoms, or the absence of symptoms, of the hereditary transmission of acquired qualities. The idealist or Neo-Hegelian solemnly watches the first unfolding of the content of the child's ideal (that, we believe, is, or latterly was, the correct phraseology, "innate

ideas" being for the present out of fashion). With complacent satisfaction the hedonist beholds the child over-eating itself. With unctuous confusion of thought but not of face the quasi-religious evolutionist observes the child "adapting itself" to an environment of sweetmeats or the reverse, as the case may be. Above all, as we gather from a recent work of Mr Sully, the psychologist has a supreme interest in the matter, and is eager to enter upon a course of "child-watching." He would endeavour, of course, to secure the co-operation of all mothers, for Mr Chillip's proposition even now holds good that "the ladies are great observers." But the child, the victim of the experiment, would, we conceive, be wellnigh ruined.

For the truth is, we suspect, that if the mothers, fathers, grandparents, and uncles and aunts, once commence Smorltork with notebook and pencil, there is not a single child of average sharpness but will "smoke" them in a minute. The inevitable result will be that the child will lose all sincerity, ingenuousness, and candour: it will at least pose, if it does not deceive, of set purpose; and that result no one would deplore more heartily than Mr Sully, for the stream of information would then be tainted at its source. At the present day, moreover, such a consequence would be especially lamentable. It is a rash thing to generalise—a rash thing to make sweeping accusations—a rash thing to assert with confidence that the former days were better than these. For the last three hundred years and more, for example, it has been a commonplace that the good old-fashioned

type of servant has disappeared, and been replaced by one palpably inferior. Orlando thought so in "As You Like It," and Swift's "Directions to Servants" will ever remain as a perpetual warning against cherishing the illusion that there is anything new under the sun. The children of to-day are like enough no more spoiled than many of their predecessors. But, at the risk of being guilty of the rashness which we have just censured, we cannot help thinking that the temptation to be self-conscious assails the young idea of the present age more artfully, more attractively, and with a greater prospect of success, than at any former period. Children's parties are more frequent, and are kept up much later, than in the days when Leech's delightful boy scowled at young Albert Grig for polking with the darling of his heart, and muttered, "He had better not go too far!" Leagues of children are formed for the promotion of all sorts of benevolent and fussy purposes, and infant phenomena, nurtured in the highest circles, appear on platforms lisping philanthropic platitudes, and even (we are told) pretend to edit improving magazines. Not a weekly newspaper that appeals to the general—certainly not one that appeals avowedly to the fair sex—but has its "children's page," edited by "Aunt Barbara" or "Cousin Betsy," wherein appear the photographs of prodigies who have written essays or composed poems, or who have won the prize medal of the Association for Performing One Good Act Every Day (for they are all enrolled in some such imbecile society), or who have raised the sum of three shillings and ninepence halfpenny (enclos-

ing coupon) in halfpenny stamps for the Home of Rest for Decayed Dicky-birds, or who have procured the largest number of subscribers to the periodical in question, or who, in short, have achieved some similar triumph in the cause of progress. Doubtless the vast bulk of the honest children of sensible parents are untouched by these and similar follies. Yet a certain number must fall victims; and the symptoms seem to indicate that the collapse of baldly and blatantly didactic literature which took place a quarter of a century ago has not been an unmixed blessing.

In no class of literature designed for boys and girls, it may safely be affirmed, is this self-consciousness more out of place or more distasteful than in that which deals with school-life. Yet almost all the standard schoolboy works are tintured with the vice, from which even 'Tom Brown's School-Days,' *facile princeps* as it still is, is not wholly free. The worst offenders are certainly 'Eric' and 'St Winifred's,' which have long enjoyed an unenviable, if richly deserved, reputation for sentimentality and sickliness of the most aggravated kind. Who would have dreamt that Dean Farrar's supremacy would ever be challenged? Yet here is Mr Weldon, whose 'Gerald Eversley's Friendship'¹ is, we are sorry to say, nothing if not a heroic attempt to rival the characteristic extravagances of the Dean.

The story hinges upon the friendship of two boys born and bred in vastly different circumstances, who chance to arrive for the first time simultaneously at Har—we mean St Anselm's. The "friend" is a certain Harry Venniker, the possessor of "a radiant smile that

¹ London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1895.

played now and again like a wandering sunbeam on his mobile features." His father is a peer of the realm; his home, "a stately ancestral seat," which "had scarcely been altered, except in some of its sanitary details, during two centuries." Gerald himself is quite another sort of boy, being indeed the son of an excellent country parson of severe evangelical views, and is given upon occasion to the practice of sobbing "with heartbroken passionateness." "It happened once," we are told of Gerald, "that, as he was walking with a book of poetry in his hand in the covert immediately adjoining a part of his father's glebeland, he came upon a number of pheasants that the keepers who were out with a shooting party had left—bedraggled, bleeding, some of them hardly yet dead—to be picked up in the evening when the day's sport was finished. The sight was so painful that he turned away from it as if it sickened him, and the tears came into his eyes, and he wondered if any satisfaction derived from killing these beautiful creatures could be greater than his in being innocent of their blood!" Truly we have had nothing like Gerald's exquisite sensibility thus displayed after what the Scotch counsel called a "shoot-ing expedeshin," since honest Harry Sandford, when walking with his friend Master Merton, was horsewhipped by Squire Chase for declining to tell which direction Puss had taken. To be sure, little Harry had "the noblest mind that ever adorned a human being" (*teste* Mr Merton), not to mention "dispositions that might adorn a throne." Yet of the two, young Sandford is infinitely the more likeable: he has a whiff of the country, a dash of the true bucolic stolidity, about him. Moreover,

in the case alluded to he shows the instinct of all honourable boys, "not to tell," and the sportsmanlike desire to give puss law. Besides, *he* never took his walks abroad "with a book of poetry in his hand"; while Gerald's character, we fear, is aptly enough summed up in the harsh and invidious epithets of *pleurnicheur* and "prig." To resume the story: Gerald and Venniker share a room at St Anselm's—a scantily furnished apartment, which contained "all the conventional phenomena of a dual existence": a somewhat imposing periphrasis (reminding one of the Miss Pecksniffs' staggering and tailless sparrow borrowed from the kitchen) for two bookcases, two washstands, and two basins. Nevertheless, their room was "the virgin soil, as it were, which they were destined to cultivate." Though each boy strikes out a different line for himself—Gerald preferring work and ultimately a Balliol scholarship, Venniker choosing cricket and the eleven—their friendship becomes closer, and Gerald goes to stay at the "ancestral seat" in the holidays. This introduction to new people and new ways of life, combined with a smattering of infidelity which he had somehow picked up, makes his home, his father, his stepmother, and his belongings in general less congenial to him every day. "Not that Gerald ever referred in censorious language to his home," magnanimous fellow! The life at school passes on through conventional incidents narrated in no very striking or convincing way, until it brings us to a chapter entitled "The Crisis of Faith," where "the spiritual agonies of a soul" (Gerald's, to wit) are recorded with some detail in the usual manner. That is to say, the arguments for

agnosticism and for revelation are alternately presented with so thorough a lack of reality and force, with so calm an ignoring of the fundamental points at stake, with so complacent and self-satisfied an assumption that they are not the old arguments at all, but brand-new ones absolutely "up-to-date," that the reader in a paroxysm of irritation is all but driven by the case for scepticism into faith, and by the case for faith into scepticism. Have the people, we sometimes wonder, who think they read this kind of thing with instruction and profit, ever heard of David Hume on the one side, or Dean Mansel on the other? Half an hour with "the daring boy who fairly floored both mind and matter," or with the Bampton lecturer, might help to dissipate the thick vapours of their minds. Fortunately, even "the volcanic upheavings of a soul's fiery unrest" cannot go on for ever, and the tale resumes its course onward to a most melancholy ending which we need not recount.

The lamentable thing is, that the book is redeemed by little that is excellent in the way of character-drawing or of humour. The personages flatly refuse to come to life, though their creator plays the sedulous Frankenstein for all he is worth; the style is turgid and uneasy; trite and ponderous reflections on life abound; not a hint of the atmosphere or spirit of public-school life is successfully communicated. It is curious to note that one incident in the "comic relief," which turns on the immense trouble required to make a deaf person catch a perfectly trivial remark, was anticipated by Miss Catherine Sinclair some sixty years ago in

'Modern Accomplishments' — a novel of which no one has ever heard, and which still fewer, as the Irishman said, have read. At almost every point, indeed, 'Gerald Eversley's Friendship' must yield to a much shorter and much less pretentious book by Mrs Forsyth Grant,¹ which, crude and unsatisfactory as in some respects it certainly is, and plainly as it may disclose the hand of an artist who is not yet completely mistress of her craft, displays much keen discrimination of character, and holds out the promise of better things in the future. Meantime, let Mr Weldon look to it. *Facilis descensus*; and unless he takes care the headmaster of Harrow may, before he knows where he is, be found perpetrating another 'Darkness and Dawn' or another 'Gathering Clouds.'

It is a relief to pass from these volcanic upheavings, these unwholesome agitations, these self-inflicted agonies, into the calm and serene atmosphere of the FAIRY TALE. There, at all events, is no place for affectation or staginess, there no bosoms are racked by the effort to keep abreast of the "best thought" of the day, no souls distracted by fondly pampered doubts. There events move with ease and spirit; a pleasant and delightful humour is diffused around; the world is regulated according to a clearly marked but most felicitous and well-ordered convention; above all, we mingle with human beings who are capable of engaging our sympathies, and whom we feel to be of our own flesh and blood. The fairy tale has always flourished vigorously, but it seems to have taken a new lease of life within the last four or five years. There

¹ The Hero of Crampton School. Edinburgh: Nimmo, Hay, & Mitchell.
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are the four volumes of Mr Lang's editing, resplendent in the various colours of the rainbow;¹ and few be the schoolrooms where one or all of them may not be found. Mr Jacobs can boast of more than an equal number;² Mr Baring-Gould has two to his credit;³ and Mr Couch is responsible for one.⁴ Besides these, there must be innumerable fairy story-books of a less ambitious kind, similar to those which held their own in many a nursery, when the artistic instinct of childhood was amply satisfied with indifferent woodcuts and highly coloured "chromos"—illustrations which, to our thinking, imparted a grim and hideous ferocity to the ogre, a manly beauty to the youngest son, an emphatic if somewhat ostentatious charm to the ill-used daughter, that the more refined and infinitely more skilful methods of modern draughtsmen need never pretend to rival, much less to surpass. The four continents have been ransacked for fairy tales; every savage has been industriously "pumped"; and it looks as if future editors and collectors will be able to add very little to this portion of the public stock of harmless pleasure, unless indeed they should be fortunate enough to discover the long-lost "Buck of Beverland" which Mr Burchell narrated to the Primrose children. Yet, we daresay, new versions will from time to time crop up to modify the current view of what a particular story is in its purest and most essential form, stripped of all accidents and accretions.

The maxim, *melius est petere fontes quam sectari rivulos*, doubtless holds good in this as in any other branch of research, but in none is its application attended with more serious difficulty.

A comparison between some of the versions given by Mr Lang, Mr Jacobs, and Mr Baring-Gould reveals many interesting and significant discrepancies. Thus, in *'Jack the Giant-Killer,'* Mr Jacobs, whose version is singularly full, although he considers the second part a "weak and late invention of the enemy, and not *volkstümlich* at all," has omitted the incident of the giant dragging the knight and his lady by the hair of their heads. Both Mr Lang and Mr Baring-Gould, on the other hand, while retaining that, omit Jack's characteristic and well-directed taunt to Cormoran, "Will no diet serve you but poor Jack?" while Mr Baring-Gould actually dares to narrate the conclusion of a most exciting episode in this tame fashion:—

"When they had finished, Jack said, 'Now I can do what you cannot. I can run a knife in here,' pointing to his bag, 'without killing myself.' He then seized the knife, plunged it into the leathern bag, and out fell the pudding. The giant was surprised at this, and not liking to be outdone in such a matter, he also seized the knife, plunged it into his body, and died on the spot."

To leave out the giant's exclamation, "Odds splutter hur nails! hur can do that trick hursself," is to throw overboard not merely an exquisite trait of nationality

¹ The Blue, Red, Green, Yellow Fairy-Book. London: Longmans & Co., 1890-93.

² English Fairy Tales. More English Fairy Tales. Celtic Fairy Tales. More Celtic Fairy Tales. Indian Fairy Tales. London: Nutt, 1890-94.

³ A Book of Fairy Tales. Old English Fairy Tales. London: Methuen & Co., 1894, 1895.

⁴ Fairy Tales: Far and Near. London: Cassell & Co., 1895.

(the giant was a Welsh giant), but what, in the opinion of every child whose judgment is worth having, has long since been decided to be the very crowning point, the absolutely supreme moment of the narrative. Again, in 'Jack and the Beanstalk,' Mr Jacobs dispenses, very wisely we think, with the fairy who informs Jack that the ogre had killed his father and stolen his possessions. The fairy and her information, he considers, were introduced at a late date merely to give Jack a good title to the ogre's wealth, and are quite out of keeping with the rest of the story. Both Mr Baring-Gould and Mr Lang, whose version is a very elaborate one, have the fairy; but Mr Lang omits the excellent little touch of Jack's surprise on waking in the morning and finding his room quite dark, thanks to the beanstalk, which, with sudden growth, has obscured his window. It would be easy to give other instances of our doctors' differences; but what has been said may suffice to indicate how great is the scope for diversity of opinion and taste. It is a question, too, how far these differences may be due not to unswerving fidelity to some imaginary original, but to editorial licence. Mr Jacobs is quite frank in admitting that he has deliberately altered here and patched there: such candid confession disarms criticism, and we are content to accept his guidance without serious cavil. But it is otherwise with Mr Baring-Gould, who is far too much inclined to abuse his editorial privileges, and who has himself supplied us with a sure means of testing his trustworthiness. It so happens, as most people know, that some of

the best known and most popular fairy tales have an authorised and accepted version (we waive the question of their ultimate origin altogether). Among these are Perrault's 'Puss in Boots' and Southey's 'Three Bears.' A judicious editor, one naturally supposes, would desire nothing better than a spirited and idiomatic translation of the former, such as is supplied in one of a charming little series with pictures by Mr Heighway,¹ and the exact text of the latter, which will be found in 'The Doctor.' Far from resting satisfied with such humble and practical ideals, Mr Baring-Gould needs insert in 'Puss in Boots' this most irrelevant and inappropriate interpolation: "The cat [at the King's Court] asked for a saucerful of milk—he touched nothing stronger, said he; *on principle, he was a teetotaller*"; while the 'Three Bears' is garbled out of all recognition, and winds up with an equally facetious stroke: "The Three Bears concluded that *little girls of the nineteenth century* were so impudent, that it was no longer possible for well-conducted bears to live in the forests of Old England." Could anything be more strained and feeble? If, then, Mr Baring-Gould thus works his will on tales, as to the recognised version of which there is no controversy, what will he stick at in his dealings with more obscure and doubtful *märchen*? He has done such excellent work in collecting folk-stories in England, that one cannot help grieving at these curious aberrations of judgment.

It is important, as we have indicated, to have an accurate version of the story; but it is at least equally important that the language in which it is narrated

¹ Blue Beard. Puss in Boots. London: Dent & Co., 1895.

should be choice and appropriate. Here many opportunities, as well as many pitfalls, await the editor. Mr Jacobs has probably done well to soften the asperities of the Scots tongue in such of his stories as hail from North Britain—the 'Strange Visitor,' for example, and the 'Black Bull of Norrøway,' though, if the dialect be more uncouth than the Suffolk vernacular in which 'Tom Tit Tot' (a particularly excellent version of 'Rumpelstiltskin') is presented, it must be harsh indeed. Perhaps Mr Jacobs would follow a different policy now when Southron readers scramble for a Scots book in proportion to the likelihood of its containing no one sentence which they can understand as a coherent whole. But in another respect Mr Jacobs disappoints us sadly, and that is in an occasional trick of slang—and not very good slang either. We do *not* believe that Jack said "Walker!" to the butcher who sold him the beans; and it grates upon us to be told that the ogre's wife "wasn't such a bad sort after all." Nor should Mr Couch, who ought to know better, and who for the most part overhauls his Taylor in his translations from Grimm, have permitted the Valiant Tailor to exclaim, "Done with you!" These offences, though apparently trifling, are in reality of a grave complexion. Children are extraordinarily sharp observers and critics of style, and the impressions produced by fairy tales—the first form of literature, as a rule, to which a child is introduced—are apt to be deep and permanent. Why, then, vitiate and deprave the youthful taste by expressions which, however serviceable in private life, are essentially commonplace and undistinguished in literary use? We are far from passing

an indiscriminating sentence of condemnation upon the use of slang in literature. In slang—"a word which itself belongs to the vocabulary it denotes"—the man of letters possesses an instrument which, though it requires very careful and gingerly handling, is capable of producing remarkable effects when wielded with tact and dexterity. No one who has read the works of *Æsop* as they appear transformed in the pages of Roger L'Estrange can ever forget the pungent and unique flavour imparted to the style by the daring and successful employment of idioms which shocked the dignified Hallam, who thought that the Fables presented everything that is hostile to good taste, and displeased the pugnacious Macaulay, who denounced the "mean and flippant jargon." But few men have the gifts of the first of Tory journalists, and he who, thinking slang funny *per se*, will not fastidiously pick and choose, but considers one cant word as good as another, and who employs the vocabulary for its own sake and not because it happens to harmonise with the context or to strike the appropriate note, had better leave it alone. We have no such crow to pluck with Mr Lang, who has throughout permitted his long narrative stories to run in what we venture to consider the true style—a style which belongs exclusively to no special period unless it be the first quarter of this century; a style adorned with an occasional touch of grandiloquence, with a fair sprinkling of long words, and with a handsome allowance of idiomatic turns of expression that have dropped out of common speech; a style suggesting now 'Sandford and Merton' without its circumlocution, now 'The Parent's Assistant' without its

sententiousness. It is a style perfectly intelligible to any ordinary child, yet sufficiently distinct from everyday talk to fix its attention, to stimulate its sense of humour, and to pique its curiosity, if it should chance to have any literary bent. "You have been into my closet. Vastly well, madam, then you shall go in again!" There is the true keeping in this truculent address of Bluebeard, which may be taken as a specimen of the diction which is specially suitable to a fairy story.

We should be sorry to have to pronounce definitely upon the respective methods of Mr Lang's and Mr Jacobs's fairy books, and if we are conscious of a slight preference for Mr Jacobs's, that is probably owing (apart from Mr Batten's quaintly humorous designs) to his inclusion of 'Childe Rowland,' and 'Mr Fox,' with its refrain, "It is not so, nor 'twas not so, and God forbid it should be so." But it is scarcely fair to institute too close a comparison, for Mr Jacobs, unless we do him a great injustice, never quite takes his eye off a grown-up audience. At any rate, he has enriched his collections with a series of fascinating notes (from which children are duly and solemnly warned off), and from these the ordinary reader may gather to what degree of precision the science of folk-lore has been reduced. He will there read much of "accumulative stories" and "*cante-fables*," of "name-guessing wagers," and "the youngest-son formula." He will also discover that 'Catskin,' another of Mr Burchell's repertory, is a "sub-species" of the Cinderella story, of the pure type of which there exist no fewer than 113

variants. Mr Baring-Gould also supplies notes on a more meagre scale, but their value is somewhat impaired by his obstinate and unqualified adherence to the "sun-myth" theory. Thus to him the giant's hen in 'Jack and the Beanstalk,' which lays its golden egg every morning, is the dawn; the automatic harp is the wind; the money- and jewel-bags are "the clouds that drop fertilising showers." All which to us sounds very mid-summer madness. Mr Jacobs is dead against the solar myth view; but then, like a true specialist, he seems "game" to combat everybody else's theories. We present him with the following suggestion: that he should compile an alphabetical dictionary of folk-tales drawn up and "rubricated" like a law report. As thus: "*Death-bed promise*—*Deceased wife's resemblance marriage test*—*Helpful Animal*—*Counter tasks*—*Magic dresses*—*Heroine's flight*—*Menial heroine*—*Love-sick prince*—*Shoe marriage test*—*Happy marriage*. Circumstances in which held (by Lang & Jacobs, J.J., Baring-Gould, J., dissenting) that So-and-so is not a sun-myth, but must be taken to be, &c. A similar mode of arrangement might also be adopted in the case of nursery rhymes, of which a charming collection has been issued with a preface by Mr Saintsbury,¹ in which he lays great stress on the importance of mere jingle in all sorts of poetry. (Why, let us ask parenthetically, has the rhyme of the "three little kittens who lost their mittens" been omitted from an otherwise impeccable work?) But perhaps the results of the labours of *savants* are more pleasantly communicated

¹ National Rhymes of the Nursery. Co., 1895.

London: Wells, Gardner, Darton, &

than anywhere else in a couple of fairy tales of Mr Lang's own invention concerning a certain very notable Prince Prigio of Pantoufia¹ and his son Ricardo. The flying carpet, the shoes of swiftness, the sword of sharpness—in a word, the whole apparatus of the fairy tale is there; and the characteristic *leit-motifs* are chaffed and parodied with a lightness of touch and a good nature which will charm children no less than their elders. Mr Lang, too, is of the fortunate few who can use slang wisely and well.

Of modern offshoots of the fairy tale proper we can but briefly allude to two: the "Beast" tale, and the "Wonderland" tale. The former Mr Kipling has appropriated for his own, nor is he likely soon to be ousted from his supremacy in this department. By his two volumes of jungle tales² he has contrived a considerable addition to a reputation which might well have contented even an ambitious man. With infinite spirit, yet with artistic restraint, he sets forth the sayings and doings of the beasts of the jungle: of Baloo the bear, of Kaa the python, of Shere Khan the tiger, of Bagheera the black panther, of Mowgli "the frog," a man-child bred by wolves, the central figure of most of the stories. At the beginning and end of every tale is a snatch of verse, much of it in Mr Kipling's happiest vein. The song of Darzee the tailor-bird, for example, in honour of Rikki-tikki-tavi the mongoose, after he has killed Nag the cobra and Nagaina his mate, is a marvel of cleverness. These jungle tales, it may be added, possess in a very high degree Mr

Kipling's old characteristic of being convincing, in virtue of which he *compels* the reader to accept his facts and traits as self-probative and beyond all question, save this, How on earth came this extraordinary writer to know so much?

The other "typical development" of the fairy story—the "Wonderland" tale—will always be identified with the name of Mr Lewis Carroll. The various excellences of the two great 'Alice' books, their quaint mixture of sense and nonsense, their whimsical adherence to the strict forms of logic, the dream-like unity of their action, and, above all, the aptness and fidelity of the occasional parodies, thoroughly entitle them to that position in the public esteem which they honourably hold. It is many years since they first revealed to the world their new and pleasant convention; but they still continue to receive the tribute implied in imitation. The list of children's books deliberately constructed on the 'Alice' model must be a very long one. We can think of scarcely more than one which is within measurable distance of its original; not a few are positively unreadable; the majority are certainly over bad for blessing, whether or no they be over good for banning. A very fair specimen of the Wonderland class lies before us, bearing the not very inviting name of the 'Wallypug of Why.'³ The humour is thin and forced; the puns are fatiguing; the verse is facile but savourless; and there is a sad want of the indispensable air of plausibility, of the indefinable link which seems to give coherence even to a series of incongruous and disjointed incidents. Mr Furniss and

¹ My Own Fairy-Book. By Andrew Lang. Bristol: Arrowsmith, 1895.

² The Jungle-Book. The Second Jungle-Book. London: Macmillan, 1895.

³ The Wallypug of Why. By G. E. Farrow. London: Hutchison & Co.

Miss Furniss have embellished the book with drawings which add little grace or charm to the text. In a work of this sort good illustrations are of vital importance. The two 'Alices' would not have caught the public fancy so quickly and so surely but for Sir John Tenniel's inimitable designs, from which it is almost impossible mentally to dissociate the letterpress. Who, without his assistance, could adequately have "visualised" the Mad Hatter, or the White Queen, or Tweedledum and Tweedledee, or the Black Kitten? Similarly, Mr Lear's nonsense verses gain something from his grotesque illustrations (and what more charming combination ever rooted itself in the affections of the nursery?), while 'Struwelpeter,' delightful as the English rendering is, would be shorn of half its glories were Shock-headed Peter, or Cruel Frederick, or Johnny Head-in-Air not presented to the eye in their charmingly crude reds and greens. So, too, a new nonsense-book¹ by an anonymous author-artist amply atones for the somewhat defective technique of its verse by the irresistible comicality and masterly exaggeration of the sketches. Master Bobby, who "ate a bun, flabby, stodgy, underdone," and the "little toddling child, who never spoke but always smiled," should not be long in reaching the eminence attained by Conrad Suck-a-thumb and Foolish Harriet.

Books, on the other hand, avowedly designed both for children and for grown-up people, are apt to please neither class. That the Rev. Mr Crockett's 'Sweetheart Travellers'² will prove an exception to the rule we neither assert

nor deny. But we venture with some confidence to predict that it will afford infinite pleasure to Mr Crockett's large circle of admirers. It describes the excursions of a father and his little daughter: plainly of Scots extraction (which is a great point to begin with), for they are shaky about their "wills" and "shalls," they express the wish that a bird would "quit [*sic*] making such a racket," and the little girl threatens to tell her father "on" [*sic*] somebody. The excursions are made on a tricycle, "rimmed with the prisoned viewless wind" (*Anglice*, with pneumatic tyres), a phrase which shows that the author's command of language is as great as ever. Further, they are made in Galloway and Wales, which in itself is sufficient guarantee that there are plenty descriptions of scenery and of nature. Finally, we read that the daughter was wont to "temper the observation of nature with chocolate," an expression which should satisfy any one that Mr Crockett's wit and humour are at their brightest. Those, in short, who relish the worst mannerisms of Mr Dickens inextricably blended with the worst mannerisms of Mr Kipling, will find here an abundant feast. Doubtless the taste takes some time to acquire.

We are well aware that we have been able to pass in review but a very small proportion of what may be called the current literature of the schoolroom. We have said nothing, for example, of periodicals like 'Little Folks,' or the praiseworthy 'Boy's Own Paper,' or the 'Girl's Own Paper,' which reflects too much the sentiments of second-rate

¹ Nonsense, &c. By A. Nobody. London: Wells, Gardner, & Co.

² Sweetheart Travellers. London: Wells, Gardner, Darton, & Co., 1895.

schoolgirls to be quite satisfactory, though, of course, it is absolutely unobjectionable. Nor have we bestowed that share of attention which they deserve upon the numerous works of adventure and travel with which the press still groans to please the British boy. At a time when 'Tales of a Grandfather' has been banished from schools, whose head-masters ought to know a great deal better, to make room for mechanical compilations of history where the whine of the Puritan keeps melodious concert with the snuffle of the Cameronian, it is truly cheering to come across Mr Lang's true story-books,¹ where many gallant deeds are not unworthily recorded, and whence every true-hearted boy and girl will delight to imbibe sentiments of the noblest patriotism. But our excuse for treating thus cavalierly the literature of what Ouida used to call "dering-do" is a happy one: none other than that the tide is setting strongly in its favour, and that the reading world devours nothing more eagerly than the works of Mr Stanley Weyman, and of his school—Good hunting to them! as they say in the jungle. Some of the old brigade, alas! have passed away. "Kingston and Ballantyne the brave" are no more. The latter, perhaps, never met with due recognition, for, unless memory plays us false, 'Gascoyne, the Sandal-Wood Trader,' was as sound a piece of work after its kind as a boy need wish to read. But Mr Henty is still with us, and others not a few, who, like the veteran Blenkinsop, may justly be termed "favourites of the British public," and whose indefatigable pens gladden the boyish heart anew

once a-year. Nor let us forget the writers in another strain and of another sex. Miss Yonge, luckily, is well to the fore, whose 'Daisy Chain,' simple, pathetic, and unpretending as it is, might well teach many a latter-day novelist some of the essentials of her art: could the belief once be eradicated that that art consists in bad grammar, laboured smartness, and general immodesty. Then there is Mrs Molesworth, who ingratiated herself with children once for all through the medium of 'Carrots'; not to mention a host of others, to all of whom, jointly and severally, 'Maga' wishes length of days and strength of elbow.

The history of children's literature during the last century and a quarter is both curious and instructive. Its earliest effusions were blunt and crude, consisting largely of plain and unmistakable incitements to good behaviour, yet never wholly destitute of conscious humour; so that 'Goody Two Shoes,' informed as it is with delicate playfulness, may without extravagance, and even with plausibility, be attributed to Goldsmith. "The Schoolmistress" and certain other tales in Miss Yonge's 'Storehouse of Stories' are favourable specimens of this first period. After the beginning of the century the stories assume an even more didactic cast, and the formidable name of Mrs Trimmer seems somehow to be intimately bound up with them. The mischief was, as Scott pointed out, that the moral always consisted in "good moral conduct being crowned with temporal success." The immortal 'Parent's Assistant,' by far the greatest of Miss Edge-

¹ The True Story-Book. The Red True Story-Book. London: Longmans & Co., 1894, 1895.

worth's works, and the deathless 'Fairchild Family,' best represent the second stage, the severity of which was also, strange to say, relieved by Miss Martineau's simple and pleasant 'Playfellow,' with the 'Crofton Boys' and 'Feats on the Fiord,' which modern enterprise has, we believe, reproduced in a penny edition! After a long period the reaction came,—not indeed until early-Victorians had become middle-Victorians; and a return to nature was effected by the simple processes of making the child-hero as wilfully and knowingly naughty as possible, and of throwing in an occasional deathbed. That reaction has itself disappeared; the taste for sentimentally mischievous brats has been lost, and though, as we have said, self-consciousness is still rampant, there are hopeful signs of a closer approximation to reality and good sense. In respect, then, of their choice of reading, the children of to-day are much more fortunate than their grandparents; for they have not merely the excellent entertainment provided by contemporary writers, but they have also the pick of the didactic literature, which has lost all its sting. How good some of it is! No child worth his salt will be bored by 'Sandford and Merton' or the 'Fairchild Family,' for no child will take them *au sérieux*. On the contrary, a child will revel in their archaic oddity. There is little risk of his being made a curmudgeon of by "Waste Not, Want Not," as Sir Walter Scott feared; for he will taste with infinite gusto, if not with complete appreciation, the latent humours of that and many another tale by Miss Edgeworth. As we have remarked

in the case of fairy stories, the distinctive diction, and the unaccustomed turns of thought and expression, will prove an inexhaustible source of delight to any child blessed with a measure of imagination.

We cannot close these desultory observations without paying a tribute of heartfelt admiration to a couple of works which should ever occupy the most honoured place in the school-room bookcase, after Fairy Tales, 'Robinson Crusoe,' and the 'Arabian Nights.' One is Captain Marryat's 'Masterman Ready,' Suggested by the 'Swiss Family Robinson'—a book written *by* a prig *for* prigs *about* prigs—it has completely staved in that veritable boat of tubs, if we may use an appropriate metaphor. But to be done full justice to, it *must* be read in an edition containing the old-fashioned cuts, where Mr Seagrave is discovered catching turtle, felling trees, and generally perambulating his desert isle in a tall hat, a swallow-tail coat, and an irreproachable pair of white ducks with straps. The other work to which we refer was written by Miss Catherine Sinclair, and appeared as a timely protest against the excesses of the didactic school. It is probably the most natural, unaffected, and charming account of the life of a little boy and his sister that has ever been presented to the world, as every one familiar with it will agree. For who that has ever trembled at Mrs Crabtree, laughed at Lord Rockville, adored Uncle David, and alternately wept and laughed with Harry and Laura, but will gladly echo our all-too-inadequate and feeble panegyric of the incomparable 'Holiday House'?

AN UNCROWNED KING.

CHAPTER X.—REASONS OF STATE.

THE reader will expect to hear that the King appeared at his usual hour the next morning, bearing the traces of the night's vigil in his haggard face and lined brow ; that he went through the day's business with invincible resolution, but with an abstracted manner, the gloom of which was lightened by an occasional unconquerable sigh ; and that he frequently put his hand to his forehead as though to push back the weight of brooding care which oppressed him. It is disappointing to be obliged to chronicle the fact that Caerleon showed no intention of acting in this heroic but rather harrowing fashion. He simply did not appear at all, but shut himself up in his study, where he buried himself in the piles of blue-books and parliamentary reports for which he had sent to London, growling at Cyril through the door when he besieged him in his retreat, and sending word to M. Drakovics that he could communicate with him in writing if he had anything special to say. For three days he laboured unceasingly, reading, planning, and writing, guarded by the faithful Wright, who had been summoned from the stables by a sudden message from his master, and informed all comers that "his Majesty was not to be disturbed," and would have had great pleasure in knocking the Premier down if he had attempted to force an entrance into the room.

Fortunately, there was nothing during the three days to render necessary an interview between the king and his Minister, and Cyril and M. Drakovics, giving out that Caerleon had not yet recovered from the illness which had attacked him at

the ball, arranged matters between them, and got through a large amount of important business. In so far as international politics were concerned, this lay at present chiefly in the direction of bluff, for the Powers, scarcely recovered from their surprise at Caerleon's election, had not as yet determined upon the action to be taken. Notes and protests were flying about from government to government, and the papers announced daily, with awful and mysterious joy, that such and such a statesman had been closeted for over an hour with such and such a potentate, or that this great personage had visited that great personage, and that both had emerged from the interview with clouded brows. In England, Parliament was enjoying a long recess, and any stray politicians who had arrogated to themselves an interest in the peace of Europe could only write frantic letters to the papers demanding that a special session should be summoned immediately for the purpose of dethroning Caerleon, or else asking why the Government did not at once recognise him as King of Thracia, according to the direction taken by their respective sympathies.

But Cyril's chief concern was with less responsible individuals,—inventors who wished Caerleon to purchase the secret of their new and destructive engines of warfare, or Englishmen who were anxious to enlist in the Thracian army, or to raise a troop of irregular horse in the King's name. To them all Cyril replied with a polite intimation that at the present moment the Thracian army was on so satisfactory a footing

that his Majesty had no intention of increasing it, but that when he did so, the correspondent's obliging offer should be borne in mind. This committed Caerleon to nothing, while intimating also that though he desired peace he was prepared for war, and it was calculated to convey a gentle warning to Scythia, and to keep the rest of Europe in an agreeable state of expectancy. Cyril was not a little pleased with his own statecraft, and he did his best to raise the spirits of M. Drakovics, who was inclined to fear that the King's persistent seclusion foreshadowed some kind of *coup d'état*, or even a determination to govern altogether without a Minister in future. He was merely working off his disappointment, Cyril assured the Premier, and would be all right in a day or two. But even Cyril had not calculated on the manner in which Caerleon had employed his time in his solitude. It was brought to his notice at last by Wright, who on the third evening after the ball entered the smoking-room where he was sitting with M. Drakovics, and laid a large sealed envelope on the table between them.

"Is Majesty says, my lord, would you and 'is Excellency," with a nod in the Premier's direction, "kindly read that, and be ready to discuss with 'im to-morrow any improvements you can suggest."

It was with no small apprehension that Cyril and M. Drakovics, when Wright was gone, opened and read the paper. They did not quite know what they feared, but their brows grew no lighter as they proceeded, and at the close Cyril summed up in a tone of utter despair—

"A strict system of licensing to be adopted for three years all through the kingdom, preparatory to the general adoption of a modifi-

cation of the Gothenburg scheme! It is the biggest thing ever attempted in the temperance way!"

"It is absolutely impossible," said M. Drakovics. "It cannot be done."

"I am very much afraid it will have to be done, if you mean to keep your king," said Cyril. "Caerleon has always been mad on the subject of temperance. His views destroyed his chances of office in England, and it would be just like him to risk his crown for them now. Besides, monsieur, it is just possible that he may have noticed that there is sometimes a slight confusion as to which of you is king and which is Minister, and that he means to have it cleared up."

"It cannot be done," repeated M. Drakovics, hopelessly, as he rose to go home, taking the paper with him; but when he met his sovereign in the morning he found that this plea was not accepted.

"I did not come here for my own pleasure, nor yet to rule Thracia in accordance with your ideas, M. Drakovics," said Caerleon, "but for her own good. If I can't do that, I had better go back to England."

"But this is so sudden—so early in your Majesty's reign," objected M. Drakovics.

"Exactly. The people are well affected, and will be more inclined to accept a change than they would later, when things had settled down. But of course I have no intention of forcing the scheme on them against their will."

"Your Majesty will listen to my advice on the subject?"

"As to the best method of introducing the scheme, certainly. I know that you agree with me as to the necessity of stringent legislation—you have said so several times. I think it will be best to bring in the measure at once as a Government bill, letting it be known at the same

time that my retaining the crown depends upon its passing."

"This is interfering with the liberty of the subject with a vengeance!" said Cyril. "Are you serious in risking your crown in this way, Caerleon?"

"I will not rule over a nation of drunkards," returned Caerleon.

"But set to work gradually. Do things by degrees," urged Cyril.

"And establish vested interests," said Caerleon, quickly, "and so have all our difficulties at home reproduced? No; things are in a chaos at present, and there is just this chance of gaining order. The more thoughtful among the people all see that something must be done, and the Thracians will understand a single act of authority—call it despotism if you like—better than any amount of compromises."

"But why not go the whole hog, then, and decree prohibition right off? I know that is what you temperance fanatics are always aiming at in the far distance."

"Because it would simply lead to smuggling and secret distilleries, and an illicit traffic which the police would be bribed to condone. They would be corrupted, and the people as bad as ever. Moreover, we should need to revise our commercial treaties, especially with Pannonia, so as to forbid the importation of spirits, and this is too big a thing to be carried through in a hurry, particularly just now. And then, though you call me a fanatic, I am not so bigoted a temperance man as to feel called upon to deprive those of alcohol for whom a moderate amount of it may be desirable, or even necessary. I merely wish to keep the younger generation from growing up with a taste for dram-drinking, and to make it impossible for people to meet at the *cafés* and muddle them-

selves with adulterated spirits as they do now."

"But why fool about with licences at all, instead of establishing your favourite Gothenburg system at once throughout the kingdom?"

"Because our present statistics are so imperfect that we have no idea either as to the number of existing public-houses, or the number which would meet the actual needs of the country. At present, any man who has a front yard and a table has only to borrow a bench or two, get in a cask of spirits on credit, and there is a new dram-shop. To buy out all these fellows at once would entail an expense impossible for us to meet. In future, as you see, no further taverns are to be opened, except by leave from the central authority, while each year, by means of the sum of money I propose to appropriate for the purpose from my civil list, the rights of a certain number of existing proprietors will be compulsorily acquired. By the end of the third year we ought to have reduced the number of public-houses to something corresponding with the needs of the country, and then there will be a chance for the Gothenburg system. The surviving publicans, who will have been chosen for their good behaviour and management during the three years of probation, will have become used to State control, and will have the choice of continuing their employment as salaried servants of the State, or of being bought out at once. I know the scheme is not perfect, but it is the best I can devise with the means at our disposal. We have to deal with the Thracians as we find them."

"Then what are the chief advantages you claim?"

"Restriction without confiscation, the limitation of public-houses to

the smallest possible number, the placing of control in the hands of an impartial central department, with trustworthy inspectors at its command, instead of biased local bodies, and the chance of weaning the younger generation from the drinking habits of their fathers, and impressing upon them lessons of moderation."

"I call it grandmotherly legislation," murmured Cyril.

"You might give it a worse name. I am convinced that this is our one opportunity of action, while the country is in this unsettled state. The licensing plan will be established before the people know where they are, and by my scheme that will develop into the Gothenburg system as soon as the idea has become general. If you will be so good as to have the bill drafted, M. Drakovics, I shall be glad to go through the clauses with you."

And Caerleon saw his brother and his Prime Minister retire discomfited. The die was cast. He had embarked on the course Nadia had pointed out to him, and begun the work to which she had urged him. At least she would know that he was doing his best. His action might be unconstitutional, but if so, that was for the people to resent. If they were wise, they would prefer to be well governed, even by a stretch of the royal prerogative, rather than to continue in their present state. If they were not wise, they might seek another king.

But the Thracians were wise. Caerleon's researches into the social life of Bellaviste, and some of his speeches to prominent persons since he had been in the city, had awakened public feeling on the subject of the drinking customs of the community. The one idea of the people was to appear as enlightened as

possible in the eyes of Europe, and it was a grievous blow for them to know that they had struck their new King as a nation of drunkards. The reproach must be rolled away, and the proposal for reform was received with acclamation. M. Drakovics was far-sighted enough to perceive that divided councils would ruin the future of the kingdom without doing any good to the question, and on the principle of giving up his own way with a good grace when he surrendered it at all, he threw himself loyally into the King's scheme, bestowed endless trouble on the drafting and details of the measure, and introduced it himself in one of his famous speeches. Nor did his pains end here. The bill had to be pressed through all its stages as quickly as possible, as, in spite of the enthusiasm with which it was received, it was soon evident that there was a strong opposition to its provisions, which gathered strength as time went on. The distillers and shopkeepers of Bellaviste, who had been among the staunchest supporters of the late king, but who had profited much by the excitement of the revolution and the thirst it induced, were disposed to resist strenuously any interference with their thriving trade of spirit-selling. Opposed to them were the bulk of the national party, young students and politicians principally, with a sprinkling of old patriots who remembered the emancipation of Thracia from the Roumi yoke, and the simple and frugal life which had preceded the rule of the later Franzas. These men had the courage of their convictions. A temperance society, which had led a languishing existence in Bellaviste for some time, and had been founded by the wife of a former British Consul-General, took a new lease of life, and added numbers of enthusiastic converts

every day to its roll. Caerleon was untreated to become the president, and consented to accept the office, whereupon a loyal member made a suggestion for a new medal, which was taken up with enthusiasm, and a large supply ordered bearing the King's portrait. From that day, the possession of a blue ribbon, with one of these medals hanging from it, betokened the ardent Carlinist; and the English reformers, who deprecate the degrading of the temperance question into a matter of party politics, would have been forced to admit that in Bellaviste to have taken the pledge was the unerring mark of a member of the national party. But in spite of the ardour of the new converts, the voting power of the liquor-sellers would have swamped the bill in the Legislative Assembly, if M. Drakovics had not summoned to his aid in the Upper House his supporters from the provinces. The chieftains rallied at his call, and having all a wholesome dislike and contempt for the vices of the city, voted unanimously for the bill, which was passed triumphantly into law. M. Drakovics stood by it nobly to the end; but when it had received the King's assent, he relieved his mind a little to Cyril.

"It is not what one might have expected," he said, "that the people should so completely support the new King without once asking what were the views of the old Minister."

"Why, what could you expect?" said Cyril. "You introduced the bill; naturally they thought you approved of it."

"They took it for granted," said M. Drakovics. "The King is everything; I can only execute his orders."

"Yes," said Cyril, "you meant him to be figure-head, and he insists on steering. It must be rather disconcerting."

"You laugh at me, milord? I would ask you to remember that there have been cases in history in which a Minister who has raised a king to power has also deprived him of it."

"And other cases in which the king has dispensed with the services of the Minister," said Cyril, quickly. "I will back my reminiscences against yours, M. Drakovics. But it is foolish to go on quoting modern instances in this way, especially when you remember that Caerleon doesn't care a straw whether you deprive him of the kingdom or not. You have done your best for the bill, and laid my brother under an obligation. You can't do without him, nor he without you; so don't let us hear any more about dethroning kings and so on. It's very bad form to talk to me about it, at any rate, and I don't like it. We shall rub along together very well if we are ready to give and take on both sides. And to cheer you, I'll tell you something that will please you. I shouldn't wonder if Caerleon has done a very good stroke for himself by getting this bill passed."

"For himself? Naturally so."

"And for the kingdom too. Here is a regular collection of English papers which has just come in, and I have been looking through them to see how our proceedings are regarded. Of course our own men are waiting for an authoritative pronouncement from the Government before saying anything; but it is easy to see that they consider Caerleon a rather dangerous lunatic at large. But the Radical papers, from which I was anticipating floods of eloquence, are brought up in mid career, most of them, by this Liquor Bill. They are nearly all committed to temperance reform at home, and they positively can't slate the first man who's courageous enough

to try it, even if he is defying their dearly beloved Scythia. Of course their cry is for absolute prohibition; but none of them have been able to get so near it even as the Scandinavian system, and though they scout the idea of compensation, they can't help respecting a man who sacrifices a third of his civil list to form a fund for buying up licences. Of course the non-temperance papers are rabid. Caerleon is a faddist, and a Puritan, and an Exeter Hall autocrat, and so on. Dickinson, in 'Mendacity,' calmly—or rather frantically—demands that he should be impeached, not for his temperance legislation, of course, but for poaching on Scythia's preserves. Rather a fine idea to impeach the king of a foreign country, whom you can't possibly get hold of, isn't it?"

"Then the English papers have awakened to our proceedings at last?" said M. Drakovics, with rather a sickly smile. "The Government has made no declaration of policy yet, I suppose?"

"No," returned Cyril; "but I think there is a storm brewing."

"Ah!" said M. Drakovics, quickly. "Why?"

"From the extraordinary number of letters which have come for Caerleon from old family friends, old comrades of my father's, and so on. The Master of his college has written, and the Bishop of Carsfield—who was head of Eton in our day—and a good many others whose names carry weight; and all their letters are in the same strain, begging him to reconsider the step he has taken, and return to England at once. No doubt the Powers have begun to see that it's all very well to send notes to St James's demanding that Caerleon shall be recalled, but that St James's has no power in the matter. If the Government had sent him out, it

might recall him; but he came on his own initiative, and it would only be courting a rebuff to order him back if he wouldn't come. Our men are too wise to lay themselves open to such a slight, but anything that they can do unofficially they will."

"Ah!" said M. Drakovics again.

"For instance," Cyril went on, "here is a long screed from Forfar, writing, as he says, not as leader of the party, but as a personal friend of Caerleon's. That's all very well; but it's quite plain that the letter is an unofficial warning from him and the Duke——"

"What duke?" asked M. Drakovics.

"His brother-in-law, the Duke of Old Sarum, of course," said Cyril, impatiently. "He entreats Caerleon to withdraw from Thracia immediately, and hints how very painful it would be for the Government to have to take action against him. He says that he has broken through strict official usage in sending him this friendly warning, and earnestly trusts he will accept it. After this they must act as they find necessary, and he must take the consequences. That last little touch is the duke's, I know."

"And what does the King say? Will he take the advice of all these old friends and kind people?" asked M. Drakovics, anxiously.

"Rather not!" laughed Cyril. "He means to stick to you and Thracia. No; there's only one thing that would get him away, I think. If Forfar and the Duke had the sense to get a certain Person to write to him and ask him as a favour to abdicate, and not disturb the peace of Europe——"

"I see," said M. Drakovics, "you mean the——"

"There's no need to mention names," said Cyril. "I merely say that I am afraid Caerleon's chiv-

alous feeling would make him yield to a request from a Person in such a position, and with so much experience."

"But have they done it?" asked M. Drakovics, looking anxiously at the heap of papers on the table, as though he expected the letter of the Illustrious Personage to arrive by the ordinary post, bearing a 2½d. stamp.

"Not they!" said Cyril. "A bold, picturesque dash like that is quite beyond them. But I will tell you what I have here—two more warnings. One is from a man who was at Pavelsburg with me. This is what he says: 'Dear Cill, *Que diable fait ton frère dans cette galère?* If you take my advice, you will get him out of it as quickly as you can. I say this for auld lang syne.' The other is from Mrs Sadleir—not a letter, simply a sentence underlined in one of these precious newspapers—'If he is wise, the so-called King will do his best to obtain recognition from Roum as soon as possible.'"

"Exactly," said M. Drakovics, with a ghastly smile, "and my news to-day is that there is a hitch in our negotiations with Roum. Our envoy at Czarigrad has been refused an audience, while a special Scythian mission was received with peculiar warmth."

"Ah!" said Cyril, "and if the recognition is refused, you are a rebel, and Caerleon and I are filibusters. Decidedly, in such a case as this, nothing succeeds but success. *Allons, monsieur!* we are all in the same boat, and we may as well stick to it. The Grand Signior may have been only trying to put Scythia off the scent. If so, we shall see. If not——"

M. Drakovics was departing, shaking his head, and Cyril returned to his work of writing

answers to his brother's correspondents. He had no further private conversation with the Premier for several days, until one morning when M. Drakovics entered the office in great excitement.

"Milord, we are lost! The Czarigrad envoy telegraphs that our recognition is definitely refused. There is a *rapprochement* between Scythia and Pannonia—the Emperors have met. Secret negotiations are proceeding among the Powers, and the British Government is understood to be neutral. There is only one thing that can save Thracia. His Majesty must marry the Princess Ottilie of Mœsia."

"Indeed!" said Cyril. "What good will that do?"

"Everything. The King of Mœsia is the nephew of the Grand Duke of Schwarzwald-Molzau, and they are connected with every reigning family in Europe. Moreover, the King, so I learn from my correspondent at Eusebia, would like the match. The Queen wishes her daughter to marry the Prince of Dardania, but he objects to him, and has more than hinted that he would prefer a son-in-law from Thracia. Again, we can offer an inducement. There is a strip of territory on our Mœsian frontier which has been ours since the last war. The people are really Mœsians, and give us more trouble than all our Thracians put together; but we have held on to the territory, knowing it would be useful as a *quid pro quo* in case we ever wanted anything from Mœsia. The King would give anything to have it back, and for it we shall gain the strongest family alliance we could propose, and the help of Mœsia and the Mœsian army in case of war."

"There seems to be a good deal of the *quid pro quo* in your philosophy," said Cyril. "The difficulty

will be to make Caerleon come into it. How are you going to get him to propose?"

"His Majesty need not do that in person," said M. Drakovics, drily. "I have already telegraphed to Eusebia to instruct our agent to make formal proposals to the King for the hand of the Princess."

"And this without telling Caerleon?" cried Cyril in astonishment. "Well, I don't envy you when you try to do it. If he kicks you down-stairs, don't say that I didn't warn you."

"But it is you that will be kicked, milord, not I," said M. Drakovics, calmly. "His Majesty is your charge, the kingdom is mine—that is our agreement, as you know. I have taken my share in this affair by setting on foot negotiations for the safety of the kingdom. It falls to you to bring his Majesty to agree in them."

Caught in his own trap in this way, Cyril passed a very bad quarter of an hour with M. Drakovics. The elder man was resolute, the younger furious—the ground of his fury being not so much the nature of the Premier's action as the fact that he had taken it without consulting him. That M. Drakovics had exceeded his powers and got into a scrape, and was now looking to him to save him from the consequences, was Cyril's view of the case; but as often as he urged it M. Drakovics calmly replied that it had been necessary to act immediately, and that if he had consulted Cyril the latter would have hesitated to agree without sounding his brother, which would have destroyed all hope of success. Finally, M. Drakovics, with a cool obstinacy, which showed Cyril another reason for his being called the Bismarck instead of the Kossuth of the Balkans, reiterated his demand that Cyril should undertake to acquaint Caerleon with

the part it was desired that he should play.

"You see, milord," he observed, frankly, "if the King was angry with me, and lost his temper so far as to attempt to strike me, or even to address me rudely, I am bound to resent it, for I represent Thracia. I should feel obliged to resign, and then Thracia is lost. But you are different, and, moreover, you are better acquainted than I am with his Majesty's character, and the best means of approaching him."

"It strikes me that my valour is the better part of your discretion," said Cyril; "but there is something in what you say. Don't imagine that I shall spare you, though. I quite see that Caerleon ought to marry this Mnesia girl—in fact, that it will probably make all the difference between success and a big smash-up if he does—but I don't think you have acted on the square. You needn't blame me if you are out of office this evening. Well, now to beard the lion in his den. It may as well be done at once, before an ecstatic telegram arrives from King Johann Casimir, welcoming his proposed son-in-law to his kingdom and his heart."

M. Drakovics smiled to see Cyril pause in front of one of the mirrors in the corridor as he spoke, and rearrange his tie, which had become twisted in the heat of the argument; but when he saw him put his hands in his pockets and lounge calmly into Caerleon's study he understood better. Cyril's rôle was to be that of absolute innocence.

Caerleon was sitting at his writing-table, busy with the reports and telegrams from Thracian agents at various Courts which M. Drakovics had brought for his consideration, taking care to abstract the one from Eusebia. He looked up as Cyril came in.

"Have you heard of the different

blows which have fallen upon us?" he said. "Things look pretty black."

"Oh yes, Drakovics has been telling me," returned Cyril. "I hear you are to act Curtius, and throw yourself into the gulf."

"By abdicating? Has Drakovics come to that? I haven't. I don't mean to give up Thracia without a little fighting, unless they can find a better man whom the people will accept."

"Something much more heroic than that. There is a lady in the case. Marriage is the gulf."

"Then I fear the gulf will remain unfilled," said Caerleon, turning back to his papers.

"Oh, that's all fudge. You know it's the only thing."

"There's no need to discuss it," said Caerleon, coldly. "You know what I feel on the subject."

"But what is the good of wearing the willow all your life——?"

"I have already said that I decline to discuss the subject with you," said Caerleon, and Cyril saw that in speaking calmly he was putting a very strong constraint upon himself. He changed his tone instantly.

"Oh, very well. Of course I have no right to complain if you tell Drakovics things you won't tell me. Still, it's rather rough on a man."

"What do you mean? You know perfectly well that nothing is further from my thoughts than to discuss my private affairs with Drakovics."

"Oh, I suppose you call this a public affair," returned Cyril, with the air of a man who had neither time nor inclination for such nice distinctions. "I don't want to appear inquisitive, but perhaps you'll let me know the day when it's fixed?"

"Cyril, are you mad? or is this

a particularly feeble joke? Tell me what you are driving at."

"Of course it's no business of mine," Cyril went on, unheeding; "but when you have gone so far as to authorise Drakovics to make proposals for a lady in your name, I think I might have been told."

"I propose? and through Drakovics? You must be dreaming. Who is the lady?"

"Princess Ottilie of Mœsia."

"A girl I have never spoken to in my life!" Caerleon's tone was one of hopeless bewilderment.

"Oh yes, you have. You danced with her at the State ball two years ago, when the Mœsias visited England, don't you remember? The King looked on and smiled approvingly, and the chaperons began to get together and discuss seriously the best way of preventing foreign royalties from carrying off the biggest things in the marriage market. I believe they came to the conclusion that no princess ought ever to be allowed to marry a subject. With princes it was different, of course. You can't have forgotten?"

"I remember her—a black-eyed, rather bouncing girl. But you don't mean," and Caerleon grew hot and cold as the recollection came back to him of the chaff he had endured from his friends on account of the unmistakable favour shown him by the royal guests,— "you don't mean that they are on the track of that foolery again? They must be made to understand that it's absolutely impossible. You never believed it?"

"I was very glad to hear it."

"What! when you know that it's less than a month since I asked Nadia O'Malachy to marry me, and that I would willingly chuck up the kingdom to-day if she would only take me?"

"I hoped," said Cyril, deliberately, "that you regarded that affair

as over and done with, and were intending to sacrifice your private feelings and do the best thing for the country."

"You thought I was going to be a scoundrel?"

"I *wish* you would not be melodramatic," said Cyril, pathetically. "Here we are, between the devil, which is Scythia, and the deep sea of the neutrality of the other Powers, and you have the chance of putting everything right by marrying a very handsome girl belonging to one of the oldest houses in Europe. I am not given to preaching, but I do say that it would be a sin not to sacrifice your feelings in such a case, and marry her. The marriage would simply be the making of you and Thracia both."

"I—will—not—do—it," said Caerleon, forcing out the words slowly.

"As for Miss O'Malachy," went on Cyril, "I give her credit for possessing much too good sense to wish to keep you a bachelor all your life for her sake. If you were to consult her, I am sure she would wish you to make a suitable marriage. In fact, I should think she probably advised you to do so." The blow told, for Caerleon winced at the remembrance of the advice which had been almost harder for him to hear from her lips than for Nadia to give. "She knew what she was doing when she refused you. It meant that you were each to go your own way in the future, with no thought of the other. If you don't marry, it will be thought you still have hopes of her."

"And what is it to you if I have?" demanded Caerleon, so fiercely that Cyril jumped. He could not think of anything to say, and presently Caerleon resumed in a quieter tone, "But I have none. She put me on my honour to stick

to the kingdom, and so long as I am king she will have nothing to do with me."

"I knew she was a sensible woman!" said Cyril, triumphantly. "Now, Caerleon, let me advise you to take this thing quietly. See Princess Ottilie. You haven't an idea what she is really like, and you may find her very like Miss O'Malachy—" ("I hope to goodness he won't," he added to himself), "or she may catch your heart at the rebound, or you may fall head over ears in love with her, and find that you really mistook your feelings before—"

"I am so sure of them," interrupted Caerleon, "that I won't pretend to run after another girl for anything you can offer me."

"Then I should like to know what you mean to do," said Cyril. "It's not a private and personal matter; it is to save your kingdom."

"Hang the kingdom!" cried Caerleon. "I won't sell myself for its sake. If I can't be king and be a gentleman, let the kingdom go."

"If you would only listen!" sighed Cyril. "This is what I was going to say. Take no further steps of any kind, and leave everything to Drakovics. Things can be formally arranged without your going near the girl, and the mere fact that the preliminaries are settled will do all we want. Once we are past this crisis, and Scythia and Pannonia have quarrelled again, you can pay a visit to Eusebia, and make yourself so disgustingly disagreeable that the Princess will be bound to throw you over."

"Of all the shabby tricks!" cried Caerleon, pushing back his chair violently. "I declare, Cyril, if I didn't know you were joking, I'd kick you out of the room. Entrap a girl into a bogus engagement for

the sake of a political advantage, indeed!"

"I only wish you had displayed a little of this aggressive virtue before," said Cyril. "You quite gave Drakovics to understand, when he first offered you the crown, that you were prepared to fall in with his views about matrimony, and this is what he has been acting upon."

"On the contrary, I disagreed with them even then," said Caerleon; "and if I hadn't, what has happened since would have put my complying with them out of the question. You ought to know that. But perhaps it was you that put Drakovics up to this business about Princess Ottilie?" turning upon him sharply.

"No, on my honour," said Cyril, eagerly, relieved at being able to deny truthfully this direct accusation. "Drakovics is a Spartan sort of fellow, and I suppose he thinks that as soon as you are off with the old love you may as well be on with a new. It's his own idea entirely."

"I beg your pardon, old man," said Caerleon. "Everything is so crooked in this wretched place that I was even beginning to suspect you. But I am glad you had nothing to do with it. Just telephone to Drakovics to come up at once, will you?"

"Why?" asked Cyril, standing before the tube, lest his brother should insist on using it himself.

"That he may explain to the King of Mœsia that he has made a mistake, of course."

"But, Caerleon, you can't do it in that way!" cried Cyril. "Think of the girl! Why, the thing is public property by this time, all over Europe, and there isn't a soul that won't believe but that you have found out something against her that has made you change your mind."

"Then I will disown Drakovics's

action, and say that he acted without authority."

"Then he will resign, and you will lose the only man who has the confidence of the people, and can support you at this juncture. You can't do it, Caerleon. Besides, that again is a nasty one for the girl. Can't you see her? No one can tell what might happen then."

"If I see her, I shall simply tell her the whole story," said Caerleon, grimly. "She will have no wish to marry me after that."

"Let me tell her about it for you," suggested Cyril.

"No, thank you," returned his brother. "I have an idea of the way you would speak of it—a youthful indiscretion, of which I was ashamed. And I am not ashamed. I should be the proudest man on earth if Nadia were to be crowned with me this day two months."

"Very well," sighed Cyril. "I suppose if you will make an ass of yourself, you must. We are to make arrangements, then, for a personal interview, in which you will, in so many words, refuse to marry Princess Ottilie?"

"There's no occasion to do anything so rude. I shall simply tell her the truth, and leave it to her to refuse me. Or I'll write to her. Yes, that's much the best plan. It will save time and a lot of difficulty."

"But you can't!" cried Cyril, with his hand on the door. "Do you mean to write to a girl who hasn't even accepted you, and tell her you won't marry her? No, you must see her, as you say, and explain things. I'll manage to get you an interview somehow, though it's against my better judgment."

"Be quick, then," cried Caerleon after him, as he went out, "for if there's any delay, I'll write to her myself."

CHAPTER XI.—A DELICATE NEGOTIATION.

"Well?" asked M. Drakovics, anxiously, when Cyril appeared in his office. "How does he take it?"

"As badly as you could wish. He won't hear of marrying Princess Ottilie, and wanted to telegraph his views at once. However, I've got him to consent to see the lady, so that the honour of refusing him may rest with her, and if we play our cards well, that ought to give us all we want."

"How?" asked M. Drakovics, quickly.

"It will give us time and a favourable impression, and if once Scythia and Pannonia can be induced to separate, we ought to be able to prevent their coming together again."

"We ought certainly to be able to manage that. But how do you propose to bring about a coolness between them?"

"The coolness will come fast enough when it is understood that Caerleon is going to marry Princess Ottilie, for the Empress of Pannonia was one of the Schwarzwald-Molzau. Our business, therefore, is to produce the impression, if only temporarily, that he is going to marry her."

"Right!" said M. Drakovics, emphatically. "And your method?"

"We are to consider it settled, I suppose, that the King of Mæsia will take kindly to the idea? Very well. Then, as soon as his answer is received, you must telegraph to inquire whether he will give a private audience to a confidential envoy of the highest rank, in order to discuss matters connected with the proposed marriage. Then either you or I must go to Eusebia."

"But why?"

"In reality to arrange for this interview which is to end every-

thing. But if the European public chooses to regard the mission in a different light, we cannot help it."

"Ah!" said M. Drakovics. "But you must go. I dare not leave Bellaviste at this juncture. I cannot trust the townspeople."

"Never mind," said Cyril, "I will go. There is no need to wait for King Johann's answer before making our preparations. If you will set about having relays of horses got ready for me at all the posting-stations, I shall be able to start as soon as things are settled."

"And you will not have to go as far as Eusebia," said M. Drakovics. "The King and Queen and Court are at Herzensruh, a country-seat which is only a few miles from our own frontier. Your idea is excellent. If only we could produce the impression that the King himself was coming *incognito* to plead his own cause! I suppose it would be impossible for you to personate him?"

"Considering that there is just eight inches' difference between our heights, and that the King and Queen and Princess all know him by sight, I think it would," said Cyril. "But, believe me, monsieur, my visit will serve our views better than any romantic journey Caerleon himself could make."

"What do you intend to say to King Johann?" asked M. Drakovics.

"My cue will be this. Caerleon is a very modest and retiring fellow, with an exaggerated idea of his own defects. He has been horrified to discover that proposals have been made for his marriage without his having any opportunity of consulting privately the wishes of the Princess——"

"I see," said M. Drakovics.

"You may put as much blame on me as you like," he added, magnanimously. "I am a statesman, a plain man of business, knowing nothing of the subtleties of love-making, you perceive?"

"Precisely. Well, Caerleon cannot bring himself to believe that the Princess would be willing to accept him if she knew what he was really like. A ballroom acquaintance does not seem to him a sufficient foundation for a happy marriage, and he is afraid that his character and tastes might not suit the young lady's. This distressing diffidence is making his life such a burden to him, that I am sent to see whether a meeting between the young people cannot be arranged before anything irrevocable is settled. Of course, when the meeting has once taken place, all will come right. It would be treason to the Princess to think otherwise. You see, if it is properly put, it is rather complimentary to her than not."

"Yes; but then the meeting will destroy everything."

"But we shall have done what we wanted. And I don't despair of squaring Princess Ottilie. Caerleon has agreed to abide by her decision, and if she won't consent to refuse him, he must marry her. There's no doubt that if he told his story to King Johann, he would simply laugh at it, and the Princess may do the same. But that must depend on any chance I may get of speaking to her alone. Where is the meeting to be?"

"There need be no difficulty about that. We have several matters in dispute with Dardania, and it has long been agreed that King Carlino and the Prince of Dardania should meet and talk them over under the excuse of a hunting-party. Now, our frontiers meet those of Moesia and Dardania at a spot only three or four miles

from Herzensruh, and it will be the easiest possible thing for the Moesian royal family to arrange for an interview on the occasion. The time and the exact details you will of course decide."

"All right," said Cyril; "but isn't it rather a pity to have the Prince of Dardania knocking about on such a delicate occasion? He might be inclined to spoil sport."

"Pooh!" cried M. Drakovics; "he may try, but he will not succeed. What chance has a prince when a king is in the way? All women are dazzled by a crown, and the Queen and her daughter will be the very first to scorn him."

"Very conveniently for us," said Cyril. "Well, we will consider that settled. Now for another very important matter. The whole thing must be carried through with exaggerated secrecy, and yet the secret must leak out, do you see? or we shall have all our trouble for nothing."

"Certainly," said M. Drakovics. "A whisper to my agents on the various European Bourses will ensure that."

"Whispers are apt to be overheard," said Cyril, "and I have a better plan. You remember Hicks, the American who gave us so much trouble over the O'Malachy business? Well, it so happens that he is spending two or three days here after going to Bashi Konak and back. I met him last night, and he tried to pump me as to the way in which his Majesty was getting over his disappointment. Of course I told him nothing, only shook my head and looked knowing, and intimated that I could make startling revelations an if I would; but that is a good foundation for our business now."

"And you knew nothing at that time of all this!" said M. Drakovics, with reluctant admiration.

"Of course not; but I was not going to give myself away by saying so. What would become of diplomacy if men said plainly when they knew nothing about a thing? Hicks is going to be as good as a news-agency to us, but he will have to find out everything for himself. You understand?"

"I am deeply interested, milord. Pray proceed."

"Well, in the evening you will bring out a special Gazette with an official announcement that the rumours which have been lately in circulation as to a *rapprochement* between us and Moesia are wholly premature and unauthorised. Of course there are no rumours, but that is a detail. There will be some soon enough, and it will stir Hicks up. Then, when it is dark, I send down our English groom to the Hôtel Occidental, to inquire whether they can let us have two horses that are good for a hard long-distance ride next morning. We could use our own horses, naturally, but there would be no publicity in that. He will not say where they are to go, but he will hint mysteriously at a country not far to the west of us, and he will obstinately refuse to state who is going to travel. After that, I think it will be surprising if Mr Hicks doesn't hire a window overlooking the west gate, and sit up all night to see the start."

"And then?"

"I shall take only Wright with me, but you will accompany me to the gate, mentioning loud enough to be heard that the relays of horses are ready all the way. I shall be muffled up, as though to escape recognition; but when I am abreast of Hicks the muffler will slip for a moment, and he will just catch a glimpse of my face. That will be enough for him, and the news will be all over Europe by the evening. I only rely on you to take no further

steps without consulting me, and to keep any papers which speak of the marriage as a certainty out of Caerleon's way until I return."

"But are you able to undertake so long a ride, milord?"

"Oh, I shall do it somehow. The more dead tired I am the better the impression will be—haste and eagerness so intense, you know, and all that sort of thing. Besides, I shall take it out of Caerleon a little. He will be horribly cut up when he finds that I have undertaken the ride just out of tenderness for his scruples, and it ought to make him easier to manage in future. Riding hard all the way, I should be back in three days. That is quite long enough to give him a fright."

"Milord," said M. Drakovics, with deep conviction, "I am more and more thankful that it is your brother, and not you, who is King of Thracia. Hitherto I have bemoaned my hard fate in having to deal with a man with a conscience; but I perceive now that compared with a man without one he is like wax."

"Isn't that pretty good, from you to me?" asked Cyril with slow scorn, and the Premier shrugged his shoulders and spread forth his hands as he bowed himself out.

The several parts of Cyril's scheme succeeded better than, in the interests of strict morality, they should have done. The appearance of the special Gazette with its enigmatical announcement created a great sensation in the city, especially after the alarming foreign news of the morning, which had been eagerly noised abroad by Scythian sympathisers among the townspeople. Wright performed his business at the Hôtel Occidental with the most appropriate woodenness of manner, stoutly refusing to be drawn into any clear statement

as to the destination of the travellers, but giving the necessary hints with an extensive facial contortion which he denominated a wink. Things had fallen out so well that Cyril felt a little pleasurable excitement as he walked through the silent streets in the autumn twilight of the next morning but one, wondering whether Mr Hicks would rise to the occasion. The King of Mœsia had replied with effusion, both to M. Drakovics's first overtures and to the telegram respecting the envoy, and the energetic sending of messages backwards and forwards had heightened the popular excitement. The horses were waiting at the west gate, under charge of a mounted police official who was to escort the travellers during the first stage of their journey, and there was a little crowd of inquisitive citizens gathered not far off. A thrill of triumph ran through Cyril as he recognised among them the sallow face and scanty beard of the American, and he rejoiced that virtue should not be its own sole reward in the case of Mr Hicks's early rising. He had muffled his throat and the lower part of his face in a silk scarf, and turned up his collar, and as he mounted it was easy to let the scarf slip for a moment, which was all that the journalist wanted. He went back to the hotel with a sensation in his note-book, and Cyril rode away on his quest cheered by a pleasing consciousness of success.

Until to-day, Wright had always entertained a deep-rooted conviction that Lord Cyril's horsemanship was far inferior to his brother's, both as regarded skill and endurance; but now he was compelled to admit that he rode "like a Trojan," whatever that vague but evidently expressive comparison might mean. With short halts for food and change of horses, they rode all day, being

handed over by their first guide to a second, and so on at every stage, and arriving at Schloss Herzensruh late at night. Cyril found himself in the care of the master of the household, who treated him with breathless consideration, and intimated that he would be admitted to an intensely private and confidential interview with King Johann in the morning, and be allowed to depart early, so as to avoid notice. The King of Mœsia had not Cyril's reasons for desiring an unauthorised publicity for his errand, and the envoy congratulated himself that he had not trusted to the enterprise of Mœsian journalists.

Morning came, and Cyril found himself conducted with extreme precaution to the King's private room, with a secretary on guard at the door, and a stalwart gamekeeper outside the window. Secrecy having been thus ensured, King Johann greeted his guest with delight, and proceeded to lay bare to him his mind and the state of feeling in his kingdom far more thoroughly than he had any idea of doing. The impression that he produced on Cyril was that of a fussy, nervous man, half elated at having emancipated himself from his wife's control, and half afraid of the consequences. Throughout their married life he had always followed her advice, and his kingdom had flourished exceedingly, until a few months back, when the little rift within the lute had originated in the double question of Princess Ottilie's marriage and the succession to the crown. The constitution of Mœsia did not allow a female to occupy the throne, and there was therefore no question of the Princess's bringing that perilous dowry to her future husband; but while her mother wished her to marry the Prince of Dardania, a distant connection

of her own, the King was ready for her to marry any one else, but not the Prince. The reason for this was to be found in the fact that there was a strong party, both in the Mœsian Legislature and in the country, who desired Prince Alexis as their future ruler, anticipating that, when united with Dardania, the kingdom of Mœsia would be strong enough to strike awe even into her rival Thracia. This party was most anxious for the marriage, and the Queen supported them with the calm determination which had always had its due weight with her more hasty husband; but here there came in an alien influence, that of the King's uncle, the reigning Grand-Duke of Schwarzwald-Molchau. He had always looked on the Mœsian throne as a snug preserve for one of the many cadets of his house, and it did not suit him at all that his plans should be crossed. Emissaries from Molchau invaded Mœsia, the King was invited to revisit the cradle of his race, and both there and in his own court he was cajoled, threatened, flattered, and bribed until he refused his consent to the projected marriage. The Queen was at first incredulous,—it seemed impossible that her power could have vanished so suddenly; but the Schwarzwald-Molzau had parted husband and wife only too effectually, and an armed neutrality now existed between them.

This was the state of affairs in Mœsia, when M. Drakovics replied to King Johann's half-veiled hints by the formal demand of Princess Ottilie's hand for Caerleon—a demand at which the monarch had jumped with somewhat unkingly eagerness. With the Princess safely married to some one else, the Prince of Dardania would lose an important support in his candidature for the throne, while there was no fear

that the Mœsians would ever elect Caerleon as their sovereign. The mutual hatred between Mœsia and Thracia was far too great for them to wish to be united under any circumstances, and this left the way clear for the formal adoption by the reigning sovereign, and subsequent accession to the Mœsian throne, of one of the younger princes of the house of Schwarzwald-Molchau.

The first question of importance to be discussed between King Johann and his guest was that of the treaty, as to the provisions of which the King was nervously anxious. In fact, he was depending on the acquisition of the disputed strip of country to reconcile his subjects to the Thracian alliance, and prevent their mourning over the discomfiture of their favourite, Prince Alexis. Hence, although he listened to it with wonder, he accepted with avidity the suggestion which Cyril had arranged with M. Drakovics that he was to make. In order to avoid the unpleasant flavour of a bargain, in which the Princess would be handed over in return for the land, the treaty respecting the disputed territory was to be drawn up and signed before any public announcement was made as to the marriage. The King did not seem to perceive that it was less objectionable for his daughter to act as a seal upon the treaty than as an equivalent in it; but he grasped eagerly at the offer, and Cyril, who had been representing in the highest possible light the delicacy of his brother's feelings, and the certainty of his refusing to countenance anything in the nature of a bargain, gave a sigh of unfeigned relief.

"This gives us a hold on the old fellow if the wedding doesn't come off after all," he remarked mentally, while the King was hugging himself in the idea that he had just achieved

one of the finest strokes of policy of modern times. It was agreed that the treaty should be signed as soon as it could be properly drawn up, and when King Johann suggested that this might well take place at a personal meeting of the two sovereigns on the disputed territory, Cyril found the necessary opening for imparting the real object of his journey. The King listened in astonishment as he unfolded his story of Caerleon's excessive humility, and his determination to consult the Princess's wishes before he would consider himself engaged to her.

"But this is abs—romantic!" cried the King. "It is a piece of the Middle Ages. Naturally the girl will accept him when she is told to do so. Why should she not? His fears are preposterous."

"That is exactly my own feeling, your Majesty," said Cyril, in the tone of one whose endurance had been taxed to the utmost; "but I regret to say that I cannot enforce it upon my brother. However, after what you have just said of the docile disposition of her royal highness, I hope the matter will prove to be merely a form."

"Of course, of course," said the King, hastily. "If the King of Thracia insists upon it I must allow it, although he will find it a very bad precedent, undermining his authority, admitting doubts as to his power, and so on. But I will instruct my daughter in her duty, and she and the Queen both know by this time that it will be the worse for her if she does not obey."

The irrepressible triumph in these words betrayed the exultation of the weak-minded man who had won a victory over a strong-minded woman; but Cyril discreetly took no notice of the tone, wondering only whether the King had intended to lead his daughter bound to the altar, and whether he believed his auditor to

be labouring under the delusion that the marriage would be a voluntary one on Princess Ottilie's part. It was arranged that the important interview should take place the day after the signing of the treaty, at a hunting-party to be given by the King at Schloss Herzensruh, the previous day's business having been conducted on what was now Thracian territory, but which would pass to Mœsia by the treaty. This settled, the King rose, and signed to Cyril to accompany him.

"Now that all is arranged, I will present you to the Queen and the Princess," he said; and Cyril, divining that the presentation was intended as a further defiance of the Queen, followed him from the room with lively interest as he marched across the corridor and entered by the door which a servant threw open.

"This is the Lord Cyril Mortimer, brother and envoy extraordinary of the King of Thracia," announced King Johann, in a voice which was in itself a declaration of war; but Cyril saw at a glance that the Queen and her daughter had no intention of taking up the gauntlet. Both were very calm, very friendly, and inquired graciously after people they had met in England. Princess Ottilie was taller and thinner than when he had last seen her, and seemed to have lost the loud manner which Caerleon had disliked. She was growing more like her mother; but Cyril felt that it would be long before the impulsive dark-eyed girl would attain to the stately calmness of the unintellectual, placid-looking lady who was said to possess one of the wisest heads in Europe. She had foiled M. Drakovics once, in some very acute crisis, and the Thracian Premier had never forgiven her for it, though he was wont to consider it a feather in his cap, as in that of the statesman whom he most wished to resemble, that he had all

the ladies against him. A little confidential communication with her would throw light on many things, Cyril thought; but this was impossible so long as the King remained in the room moving about uneasily. Her parting words, however, surprised him not a little.

"Tell his Majesty that I hope soon to have the opportunity of renewing my acquaintance with him," she said. "Among our many English friends, there is none that I remember with such admiration. I feel that one can have the most perfect confidence in him."

"Your Majesty is too good," said Cyril, astonished. "I am sure my brother has never ventured to hope that he held such a place in your remembrance."

"He is the most perfect gentleman I ever knew," she repeated, emphatically, and Cyril pondered over her words as he rode away from the castle. The last sentence he disregarded. It was a taunt flung at her husband by the queen in return for his defiance; but he was uneasy about what she had said before.

"She's up to something," he said to himself, "but I can't for the life of me see what it is. It's all very well for Drakovics to say that women will do such and such things; but that's where he and fellows of his stamp always go wrong—in imagining that they can generalise about women. It's scarcely ever possible to judge of a woman's probable conduct from precedents. She's quite capable of striking out a new line each time. I wonder now whether the Queen thinks she will get round the old man, and make him break off the match? Well, so long as we get the treaty signed, and they don't do it too soon, it doesn't much matter. If only the King had not hung about as he did, I could have

found out a good deal. But he was afraid they would let on about Prince Alexis, and so he has effectually stopped my giving the Princess a warning as to Caerleon's little game. It's his own fault if the thing is spoilt. I wonder whether he will be able to carry through the business with Pannonia properly."

This last thought exercised Cyril's mind frequently during his long ride. He had devoted the concluding part of his interview with the King to coaching him delicately as to the part he was to play, without actually making any suggestions. King Johann flattered himself that he was an accomplished diplomatist, but his young visitor could scarcely have ventured to leave him to act alone if he had not felt that the issue was so clear that the worst bungling could hardly succeed in obscuring it. The King's duty was merely to intimate to his uncle, the Grand-Duke of Schwarzwald-Molzau, that if Caerleon's position in Europe were secured, and he were assisted to marry Princess Ottilie, the succession to the Mœsian throne would be left open for one of the younger princes of the parent house. There could be little doubt that he would jump at the suggestion, and contrive to bring about the desired change in the policy of the Powers by influencing Pannonian diplomacy through his daughter the Empress. Thus Cyril's mind was tolerably at ease when, after nearly a day and a half of riding—for he had started too late to complete the return journey in one day—he came in sight of the heights of Bellaviste. They were passing through a small village when the first glimpse of the city was obtained, and Wright urged his horse up to Cyril's.

"Beg your pardon, my lord, but p'raps you'd like to rest 'ere for a hour or so, and give these 'ere 'orses

a feed and a bit of a rub-down. It looks as though we didn't know 'ow to treat a 'orse to bring 'im in like this, and me always a-jawin' the stable-boys about it."

"I am sorry that the stable-boys will have to lose their object-lesson to-day, Wright," said Cyril, with his gentlest smile, "for it is important for us to hurry. But you mustn't think I am ashamed of the state the horses are in. If you like to ride yours through the next puddle, and get him well splashed, I have no objection."

Wright touched his hat, and fell back with an inarticulate grunt. At Schloss Herzensruh he had fallen in with a fellow-exile in the person of King Johann's coachman, who was also an Englishman, and he had informed him, in the course of a long and generally lugubrious exchange of confidences, that "a straighter rider than 'is Majesty, nor a pleasanter master, I don't wish to see; but Lord Cyril—there! 'e's beyond me." Cyril smiled to himself over the groom's look of bewilderment as he rode on, and thought what a pity it would have been to spoil the effect of their return by care for the looks of the horses. As it was, when the dusty and travel-stained riders and their weary beasts appeared in the streets of Bellaviste, they created a sensation. Curiosity had been rife ever since Cyril's departure, and the wildest theories had been started to account for it, so that his return promised fresh interest to the townsfolk. They gathered about him in crowds, and inquired anxiously as to what had been settled, and whether all was well. To the first question he professed himself unable to give an answer; but on the subject of the second he was able to reassure his questioners, although the most audacious hints as to a possible queen could gain no con-

fimation from his lips until he met Mr Hicks.

"Well, Lord Cyril, guess his Majesty's about got over his disappointment, anyway?" remarked the journalist, confidentially.

Cyril responded in two words of his own language, "You bet!" and rode on to the palace. Dismounting hastily, he forbade the servants to announce him, and hurrying up the steps, staggered into Caerleon's study, and collapsed upon the sofa.

"What! back already?" said Caerleon, looking up from his papers.

Cyril sat up. "*Already!*" he remarked, tragically; "I have ridden night and day for the sake of a fad of yours, and this is all I get for it!"

"My dear fellow, why did you do it?" cried Caerleon, rising and coming towards him. "I never thought of your rushing there and back like this. We shall have you ill again. Let me get you some brandy."

"You had better call one of the servants, and let me give the order," said Cyril, with crushing irony. "*You* are a temperance man. Well, I hope you will be pleased to know that I have arranged for you to meet the Princess."

"Must I meet her?" asked Caerleon, anxiously. "I have been hoping you would manage to nip the scheme in the bud without that."

"When you forbade me to mention the matter!" cried Cyril, with natural indignation. "I had plenty of opportunities for telling the King your story, but you hinted that I should misrepresent it, so I said nothing. Of course I did the wrong thing. Well, I have done all I can, and I am dead beat. Just let me alone, that's all I want."

He turned over on the sofa and went to sleep, for he was really very tired after the three days' ride, while Caerleon stood over him in much apprehension and self-reproach. To cover his brother with a rug and send for the Court physician to see him were obviously the first things to be done; but when the doctor averred that there was nothing the matter with the patient but fatigue, and prescribed only rest and mental relaxation, he could not accept the comfort thus conveyed. When Cyril, still very sleepy, had been roused from the sofa, and persuaded to go to bed, Caerleon went round to the stables to see Wright, whom he found engaged in superintending the grooming of one of the horses, which he conceived had been neglected during his absence.

"Glad to see you looking so fit, Wright," said his master, as Wright straightened himself against the wall, and touched his cap. "I was afraid I should find you dead beat. Lord Cyril seems to be tired out."

"Do 'e, your Majesty?" responded Wright. "I 'adn't noticed it. If you'll believe me, I think as 'is lordship's 'avin' a little joke with you. 'E's always tryin' on them sort of games, beggin' your Majesty's pardon."

This was added as an afterthought, in response to Caerleon's stare of astonishment, as the King turned on his heel, and walked away in displeasure. Wright was getting disgustingly impudent, he reflected. No doubt too much had been made of him, and he felt himself justified in putting on side, as the only Englishman among the servants, but he must be taught his place. Caerleon was painfully conscious that there was not always a complete unity of aims and means between Cyril and himself, but that Wright should venture to

notice this was insufferable. He should learn that being the King's fellow-countryman did not necessarily make him his adviser, and a studied repressiveness of manner for some days would go far to make him forget that he had been chosen as Cyril's sole companion on his important mission—a fact which seemed to have encouraged him to presume. And this decision Caerleon carried out, to the signal discomfiture of Wright, whose natural enemies the stable-boys asserted themselves unmercifully when they saw that the royal favour had forsaken him.

Cyril, in the meantime, was enjoying himself. Following out the orders of the physician, he spent several days on a sofa in his room, and had all the papers brought him for his amusement. In this way he was enabled to exercise a very effectual press censorship, weeding the journals carefully, and sending down for Caerleon's perusal only such old-fashioned and respectable prints as never hint at an approaching royal marriage until the betrothal is actually announced. Thanks to Mr Hicks, all the modern and go-ahead papers were teeming with reports and rumours on the subject of the Mæso-Thracian alliance, and Cyril noted with satisfaction, two days after his return, a paragraph in a semi-official German paper to the effect that the Emperor of Pannonia seemed inclined to recede from the policy he had adopted of giving Scythia a free hand with regard to Thracia, and to maintain an attitude of reserve. This was cheering, but for several days the situation continued extremely unsettled, constant rumours of *rapprochements* and differences coming to make matters doubtful. At last it seemed fairly certain that Scythia and Pannonia were unable to agree on the Thracian question, and that

neither would trust the other to interfere; but before things had reached this dead-lock, which left matters as they had been before the two countries had come to their temporary agreement, Cyril had received a cipher message from King Johann Casimir to say that all was well.

This left the way open for the signing of the treaty, which M. Drakovics had been drafting in accordance with Cyril's notes of his conversation with the Moesian sovereign; and when everything was ready, Caerleon and Cyril left Bellaviste for the frontier, in order to entertain the Prince of Dardania for a week's hunting. The occasion was a purely informal one, M. Drakovics only coming down twice to see how the negotiations were progressing, and the little party in the hunting-lodge had a very pleasant time. The Prince of Dardania was young and athletic, and a mighty hunter, and showed himself as much delighted to escape from the worries of State and the supervision of his Prime Minister as was Caerleon. The two became great friends, and their intimacy caused Cyril much apprehension, for fear of their discussing together the situation with respect to Moesia. He gave himself endless trouble, and caught several colds, in accompanying them on all their expeditions, when he would much rather have been sitting over the fire at the hunting-lodge or lounging about the little village; but he felt that the necessity of preventing their coming to an understanding was paramount. He knew that he was a hindrance to their enjoyment, for long walks were obliged to be curtailed, and bridges sought instead of fords, in consideration of his physical weakness; but Caerleon could not bring himself to suggest

that he should remain at home, and Prince Alexis smiled and said nothing.

Sometimes it struck Cyril that all his trouble was unnecessary, for that the Prince could not know that Caerleon was his rival; but it seemed impossible that the European gossip as to the disposal of Princess Otilie's hand should not have reached his ears. More than once, also, Cyril caught him looking Caerleon over, in a musing, business-like fashion, as though he were taking stock of him, and on these occasions he always redoubled his efforts to keep the two from being alone together. He felt sure that Prince Alexis knew what was going on when, in response to a question of Caerleon's as to whether he intended to join the hunting-party at Schloss Herzensruh the day after the signing of the treaty, he replied that he could not well intrude on the King of Moesia at such a purely family gathering, but that he would no doubt be able to pay his respects later. Still, it seemed strange that he made no attempt to win Caerleon over to his side, and Cyril was still troubled by apprehension even after the treaty was signed. The points of difficulty between Thracia and Dardania had been satisfactorily arranged by the two sovereigns and their Ministers, and they were incorporated into an offshoot of the Moesian treaty, though Cyril almost feared that the negotiations would fall through when he saw the meeting between King Johann Casimir and Prince Alexis. The King's manner was nervously triumphant, and inclined to be aggressive, and most men would have taken offence at it, especially after the rupture which had already occurred between them; but the Prince passed it by unnoticed, and all went off peaceably.



CHAPTER XII.—TO OBLIGE A LADY.

The next day was that of the fateful hunting-party, and when Caerleon and Cyril bade farewell to Prince Alexis, who was returning for a few days to his capital of Bashi Konak, they were both concealing a good deal of excitement under a calm exterior. Cyril fancied that there was a twinkle in the Prince's eye as he wished them good sport, and this set him wondering again whether their guest knew anything of the affair in hand. He departed without making any allusion to it, however; and Cyril awoke to the fact that Caerleon was in a state of misery and nervousness not easily to be surpassed, through realising for the first time the full falseness of his position. The discovery appalled Cyril at first, for it seemed to him that his brother's face was enough to betray to King Johann the artifice which had been employed against him; but presently he reflected that Caerleon's confusion and evident unhappiness fitted in exactly with the story he had told the King, and his mind was at ease as they rode through the forest together. At Schloss Herzensruh every one was ready to start, and the lawn in front of the windows was occupied by a mingled group of jägers, dogs, and beaters. The Queen did not appear, but the King hurried to greet the brothers, and presented them at once to Princess Ottilie, who was looking sportsmanlike and prepared for business in a French *costume de chasse*, leather-faced skirt and many-pocketed jacket all complete, while a jäger behind her was holding her neat little rifle.

"I know how fond of sport you English are, and therefore I gave my daughter directions to wear this dress in compliment to your

brother," said the King, complacently, to Cyril, when they had withdrawn a step or two, leaving Caerleon to devise and utter incoherent remarks on the weather, which were received by the Princess with demure politeness.

"And Caerleon bars a shooting woman above all things!" was Cyril's agonised mental comment, even while he assured the King that although the Princess would look charming in anything, she was specially irresistible in hunting costume. But as he spoke, his thoughts wandered, for it struck him that Princess Ottilie seemed to be very favourably inclined towards Caerleon. There was a hint of pleased excitement in her manner, which even the delight of wearing the most *chic* and becoming of new dresses seemed inadequate to produce; and when, in response to one of her companion's laboured remarks, she raised her eyes smilingly and scanned his face, it appeared to Cyril that the expression in them was more than friendly. The thought made him almost giddy. What if the whim of a strong-willed fickle girl should succeed in doing what he and M. Drakovics had failed to achieve, and bring about Caerleon's marriage with her? Though he had suggested the possibility of this in order to comfort the Premier, he had never regarded it seriously himself; but now it struck him as by no means unlikely that Princess Ottilie might refuse to grant her unwilling suitor the dismissal he craved, in which case, Cyril thought, his brother would feel himself obliged to marry her. King Johann's voice broke in on his meditations at this point.

"I am about to desire my daugh-

ter to show his Majesty the path through the forest which leads to the blasted pine, a familiar landmark here," said the King. "You and I will then lead the hunt in another direction."

"Excuse me," said Cyril, hastily, "but I am afraid that such pronounced assistance would simply render my brother incapable of speaking at all. If we keep to our present order, your Majesty and I and the servants can easily turn into a fresh path when we are once in the forest."

The King agreed to this, although not without some hesitation, and Cyril manoeuvred the army of beaters so adroitly that before they had been ten minutes in the forest Caerleon and the Princess found themselves alone. The fact seemed absolutely to deprive Caerleon of the power of speech, and he walked on in silence beside his companion, who was firing off nervous little remarks at intervals. We are told, by those who are well qualified to speak on the subject, that words are apt to fail the man who desires to offer his hand and heart to the girl of his choice; but what is his difficulty compared with his who finds it his duty to explain to an expectant lady why he does *not* propose? The cold sweat stood on Caerleon's brow as the Princess ceased her spasmodic remarks abruptly, and seemed by her silence to invite him to speak; but after an awful five minutes, in the course of which he twice cleared his throat and made a vain attempt to say something—it did not matter what—she herself, to his astonishment, broke the ice.

"I—I have something to say to your Majesty," she began. "You have come here with the intention of—of marrying me——"

This was terrible. It rushed into Caerleon's tortured mind that Prin-

cess Otilie must belong to a German variety of the New Woman, and that she was going to propose to him. How was he to refuse her? She must be stopped at any cost.

"On the contrary," he interrupted, floundering desperately into what he had to say—"your Highness is mistaken. I have no desire—no intention—no—no hope of marrying you."

"Indeed!" cried Princess Otilie, facing him with crimson cheeks and flashing eyes. "Then pray understand that your feelings are entirely reciprocated. I have no desire—no intention of marrying your Majesty," and she made him an elaborate curtsy, which was rather incongruous when taken in conjunction with her gaiters and short skirts. But Caerleon was much too deeply impressed with the conviction that he had blundered horribly in beginning his delicate task to notice anything of the kind.

"I assure you," he said, earnestly, "that nothing could be further from my mind than to wish to insult your Royal Highness. I can only ask you to forgive my bungling way of expressing myself. I came here intending to throw myself upon your mercy, and entreat you to release me from an engagement which was entered into without my consent."

Princess Otilie still stood angry and irresolute, darting distrustful glances at him, but it seemed to Caerleon that she was more inclined to listen than at first. He hurried on—

"I will speak to you freely, Princess—not that I am ashamed of what I have to say; quite the contrary. There is a lady whom I love, and whom I would give anything to marry. But she has refused me—she is not of royal blood, and she considers that it would be disadvantageous to Thracia were she

to marry me. I have no hope of winning her so long as I remain on the throne, but I will never marry any one else. It would be perjury. When I heard that Drakovics had set on foot negotiations for my marriage I was horror-struck, and tried to break them off at once. But it was pointed out to me that this might seem to cast a slur on you, and so—I didn't do it. I think you will see that if I was wrong, it was because I was anxious to do nothing to hurt your feelings. I am truly sorry if what I said at first sounded rude, but I was anxious to induce you to refuse me. You see that I could not possibly marry you, since I love Nadia."

"Nadia—is that her name?" asked the Princess, sharply. She had been standing motionless, biting her glove, during Caerleon's laboured and stammering harangue, her brows contracted with an anxious frown, but now her face relaxed. "I like to hear you say it. You speak as if you loved her. If I wished to tease you, I might insist on holding you to your engagement, but I don't, for"—and she mimicked the words he had uttered some minutes before—"I also came here intending to throw myself on your mercy, and entreat you to release me from an engagement which was entered into without my consent. Only," and her voice took a tone of entreaty, "I have more to ask than you."

"If I can help you in any way, pray command me," said Caerleon, inexpressibly relieved to find himself transformed from a suppliant into a possible benefactor.

Princess Otilie smiled. "You don't know what you are promising, but I shall hold you to your offer. I am going to confide to you what no one knows except my mother. It is she who has advised me to consult you, for she has the greatest

confidence in your honour and discretion."

This was said very quickly, as if it was a lesson, and Caerleon could only say that, in so far as it rested with him, the Queen and Princess should have no cause to repent of the honour they were doing him.

Almost before the words were out of his mouth, the girl went on hurriedly, walking fast with her face turned away from him, and her hands twisting themselves nervously together: "I also have a romance, your Majesty—a love-story, you call it. After I had visited England with my parents, we spent some weeks at Pavelsburg, and there I met some one—a distant relation of my mother's. All these political troubles had not happened then"—she looked up at him rather piteously—"and I might follow my own heart. My father and mother were delighted; the Emperor was pleased. We could not help loving one another; but what happened afterwards would not have been so hard if all had not been so bright at first. He had spoken to my mother; she had told my father; but our engagement was not to be announced until we returned home, and the betrothal could take place publicly. But when we reached Eusebia, everything was changed. Your revolution—the Thracian revolution—had taken place; Scythia and Pannonia had quarrelled; the statesmen were playing chess on the map of Europe, and he and I were two of the pawns. He is related to the imperial family of Scythia, and Pannonia could not allow Scythian influence to be strengthened in the Balkans by his marriage with me. They did not tell us plainly that our duty compelled us to part,—they worked underground, through the Grand-Duke, my father's uncle; they sowed dissension between my father

and mother; they made our home miserable; they have parted my Prince and me. That is my story, and I have no redress."

She paused and wrung her hands, her dark eyes searching Caerleon's face, her lips quivering painfully.

"Don't cry," he said, anxiously. "If I can help you I will. What do you want me to do?"

"There is no one I can trust, no one who will help me. My father orders me to marry you, and Pannonia and all our own family are behind him. I could not escape; they would track me all over the world. My only hope is to lull their suspicions for a time—for a few days, and so to obtain the chance of marrying my Prince."

"But who is he—this happy man?" asked Caerleon.

"Alexis Alexievitch," she replied, with a vivid blush.

"The Prince of Dardania!" cried Caerleon. "Why, we have been hunting together for a week, and he has never said a word of this."

"He was to leave it all to me, unless he found some unexpected opportunity," said the Princess. "He is making all the preparations. It is difficult, because we must be married both by Greek and Lutheran rites, and he has found it best to bring a pastor from Weldart, from my mother's people. The pastor cannot arrive for a week, and we must bridge over that time until I can escape into Dardanian territory, and be married. Now, do you see what I want you to do?"

"I really don't," said Caerleon, the wildest ideas of personation, elopement, and abduction chasing each other through his brain.

"I should have thought it was simple enough," said the Princess, with a little contempt. "That week must be filled up, and therefore I want you to engage yourself to me for that time."

"Oh!" said Caerleon, stupidly. "But I thought you made a very solemn ceremony of your betrothal here!"

"And you think your Mdlla. Nadia would object? Well, I will promise you by anything you like that I will not hold you to the engagement."

"It's not that," he said, gruffly. "I am not going to tell a pack of lies."

"Oh!" exclaimed the Princess in her turn. "But I'm afraid I can't tell them for you. Do you really mind, knowing that neither of us mean it? You can say it without intention, or with a mental reservation, you know. No? Well, I see what we must do. The betrothal must be put off for a week. I have sent for a new dress from Paris, and I will not go through the ceremony until I have it to wear. My father will allow that plea. Have you not noticed that men who will calmly break a woman's heart in a great matter, will let her have her way easily in a little one, especially if it has anything to do with dress? It will be understood that we are engaged, and that will put the Schwarzwald-Molzaus off the scent."

"But I can't say that I want to marry you when I don't," objected Caerleon.

"Did they teach your Majesty very carefully that story about George Washington when you were a little boy? I have toiled through his history often, but it has not left such a deep impression on me. Very well, you must say that you will marry me if I am willing, and I will say the same about you. That will make us both safe."

"But, excuse me," said Caerleon, "is this really necessary? Don't you think that if I spoke to your father, and told him your feelings,

and interceded with him for Prince Alexis, he might relent?"

Princess Ottilie's eyes flashed. "Your Majesty," she said, "my mother went down on her knees to my father to entreat his pity for me, his only child, and without avail. Do you think that a stranger's intercession would have more effect on him?"

"But have you tried telling him that your happiness depends on this marriage, and refusing to have anything to say to any one but the Prince?"

"No; I have not done so lately," said the Princess, in a peculiar tone. "I did at first; but do you know what would have been the consequence if I had persisted? They would have banished my mother from the kingdom, or imprisoned her in a fortress, and what could I have done then? Therefore I said no more. Of late we have done our best to appear content, confiding in your honour and generosity."

"But would it not put things right if I were to withdraw at once?"

"So far right that my father would oblige me to marry one of my cousins, the Schwarzwald-Molzans, instead of you, and I could look for no help from him. You must help me. You cannot leave me to my misery, when I have trusted you like this. Help me for the sake of your own Nadia, as you would wish another man to help her if she were in my place. Oh, your Majesty, you cannot refuse me!"

"Very well. I'll do what I can," said Caerleon, rather grudgingly, as it sounded even to himself, but he hated the suggested deception.

"And you will tell no one what has passed between us?"

"Of course I won't tell your secret without your permission."

"Not even to your brother?"

"Not even to him, if you would rather not, though I don't think I have ever had a secret from him before."

"Your brother most especially," repeated the Princess, emphatically. "On your honour?"

"You don't seem to trust him," said Caerleon, wounded.

"Not at all. I simply owe him a little grudge. You know that he visited the castle nearly three weeks ago? I want to play him a trick in return for something he did then. You understand, it is a whim of mine?"

"Yes," returned Caerleon, only half satisfied.

"Ah! well, your Majesty, we are engaged—for a week. It will be needful for us to appear in public together, but I will do my best not to be a very exacting companion. I know that you English do not think as much of betrothal as we Molzäuers do. Still, one must keep up appearances. I look to you to play your part."

"In this way?" asked Caerleon, provoked by her mischievous tone, as he raised her hand to his lips.

"Ah, that is your custom? We in Germany should think it cold. If anything more is necessary, pray do the proper thing, without considering my feelings."

"If my brother was here he would make a pretty speech about the honour's being too great for safety," said Caerleon. "As it is, Princess, I must ask you not to tempt me."

"Which is a polite way of saying that you decline the honour," said the Princess, pouting a little, and trying to withdraw her hand. At this interesting juncture King Johann and Cyril, followed by the jägers, appeared at the end of the path. Cyril and the servants

drew back hastily, but the King approached the pair.

"Is it possible that the dearest wish of my heart is granted me?" he asked in a faltering voice. "You understand one another?"

"If the Princess will take me, I hope—er—er—I am ready—er—I will marry her," stammered Caerleon.

"And if his Majesty will have me, I shall welcome the honour of marrying him," said Princess Otilie boldly, a wicked light in her black eyes.

"Then you really are engaged to her?" asked Cyril, incredulously, when the brothers were alone together.

"I suppose so," returned Caerleon, gruffly enough.

"Well I am most delighted to hear it, of course. Congrats. and all that sort of thing, old man. I suppose she wouldn't let you off?"

"That's about it."

"You ought to be pleased about that, at any rate. She's an awfully good-looking girl,—any amount of go in her. I shouldn't wonder if you find her rather overpowering just at first, though. I'll take her off your hands now and then if you do. She'll think a heap more of you if you are busy sometimes."

"I should have thought you would have recommended me to try and get used to her if I am to be with her always," growled Caerleon.

Cyril laughed.

"What, in these progressive days?" he asked. "You are behind your age, old man. You will contrive to exist very happily together by never being both in the same place at the same time." And he went off to draw up an official announcement to be sent to M. Drakovics for insertion in a special Gazette, remarking that the circum-

stantial reports which had lately appeared relating to the King's approaching marriage were quite premature, since the date even of the betrothal was not yet fixed. As for Caerleon, he prepared mournfully for his interview with the Queen, who had expressed a desire to see her daughter's fiancé. The King himself led him into the boudoir where the Queen sat knitting, and was much relieved to see her kiss him on the forehead when he stooped to kiss her hand. He had feared that although Princess Otilie was pliable, her mother would prove more difficult to persuade; but he ascribed the gratifying reality partly to the Queen's sense of his own masterful personality, and partly to her pity for the evident shyness and misery of her future son-in-law, and he even volunteered to withdraw for a time lest his presence should prove a restraint on the young man's confidences. The moment that he had left the room the Queen dropped her knitting and sat bolt upright.

"I can never thank you enough for what you have done to-day," she said, in a quick sharp whisper. "You have helped me to save my child."

"I am very glad if anything I have done has pleased you," said Caerleon, lamely.

"My daughter has told me your story," the Queen went on. "Your confidence in her has touched us both extremely. If ever I can in any way serve or befriend the young lady whom you love, I rely on you to turn to me without hesitation."

"Your Majesty is too good," stammered Caerleon.

"There is one thing I wish to say while we are alone," continued the Queen, rapidly. "It is uncertain when Prince Alexis will be able to complete the arrangements for the marriage, and even when I know

the day I will not tell you. You are to be completely ignorant. The news must surprise you as much as any one. I am afraid that your engagement must last at least eight days ; but you know that it is not proposed to celebrate the betrothal until ten days hence. I hope you will not find the time very irksome, but my child is a little wayward at times. Here comes the King."

When Caerleon went out from the Queen's boudoir it was to begin the most dreadful fortnight of his life. If he had done wrong in yielding to Princess Ottilie's entreaty, he was amply punished for it. He loathed the necessity of deceiving the King, tyrannical and weak-minded though he was ; he loathed the delighted congratulations which came pouring in from all Thracia through M. Drakovics as soon as it became known that the date of the betrothal was actually fixed. He was deceiving the man whose bread he was eating, for the King had insisted that the brothers should take up their quarters at Schloss Herzensruh ; he was deceiving Cyril, who had never, so he fondly believed, concealed a thought from him ; he was deceiving his simple-minded subjects, and laying up a store of self-loathing which became almost unbearable. And, worst of all, he was turning his back on Nadia, forsaking her, and, so far as the world could see, preparing to marry another girl, exactly as she had begged him to do, and prophesied that he would do. This last consideration would have made the situation intolerable to a woman, but Caerleon possessed a dogged patience which forced him to see the thing through, having once given his promise to Princess Ottilie. But he discovered very quickly that, although it had been easy enough to offer her his help in the forest, with her tearful eyes before him and her indignant voice

ringing in his ears, it was a very different thing to carry out his promise gracefully.

He did his best, although that best was but poor. When Cyril suggested mildly that it was usual to send presents during an engagement, he took his advice, and telegraphed to Paris and Vienna orders for jewellery and objects of art ; but he did so with the bitter recollection that he had never given Nadia so much as a keepsake, while here he was showering gifts upon a girl for whom he did not care a straw. It was the same with the rides, on which it was the Princess's will and pleasure that he should accompany her at least once a-day. He had never had the chance of riding with Nadia ; but he had little opportunity of forgetting that Princess Ottilie had a splendid seat, and rode like an Englishwoman, as Cyril told her once, assuring her at the same time that it was the greatest compliment he could pay her. At first, indeed, Caerleon welcomed the thought of the rides, as likely to restrict his intercourse with his *fiancée* to the polite and friendly terms on which he felt it was both right and reasonable they should meet. But he had reckoned without Princess Ottilie, even as he had left out of his calculations the enterprising photographers who travelled from Bellaviste and Eusebia, and arranged cameras in ambush by the side of the road along which the riders were to pass, and the enthusiastic amateurs who took snapshots at them with kodaks. The Princess had eyes like a hawk, and could detect the most artificially concealed camera some time before she came abreast of it, and distinguish a photographic maniac at any distance, and at the crucial moment she would begin a confidential low-toned conversation, which obliged Caerleon to lean politely towards

her in order to hear what she said; or she would drop her riding-whip. It was against his principles, she had discovered, to let the groom pick it up, and thus she had the pleasure of seeing him dismount and rescue it himself, while the lurking enemy gloated over the negative he had secured, which was destined to appear after a week or two, in a more or less appalling form, in one of the Continental illustrated journals.

"It isn't the riding I mind, but I do bar her tricks," Caerleon bemoaned himself one day to Cyril, who had witnessed one of these incidents.

"Never mind," said Cyril. "She only wants to show you off."

"If she carries on much more, I shall cut," said the victim, gloomily.

"Beastly mean, if you do," said Cyril. "The girl's awfully gone on you. When I get her alone sometimes, and sing your praises to her, you should see how pleased she is. Do be sensible, old man. Any other chap would think himself in clover to have a smart, good-looking girl, and a princess too, in love with him to that extent."

"Well, I shall get thrown, then. That will stop the rides, at any rate."

"Don't, if you take my advice. She will insist on nursing you—rather like it than otherwise. As to your objecting to go out with her——"

"I shouldn't, if I wasn't engaged to her," groaned Caerleon.

"Oh, Lothario!" laughed Cyril, but he forbore to pursue the subject further. He was so much delighted by the success of his diplomacy that he could afford to

be generous. How the Princess had managed to draw Caerleon into the engagement he could not guess, but he was the last man to quarrel with the accomplished fact. He could stand a good deal from Caerleon in these days, he told himself, taking credit for much forbearance towards a fellow who was as bad as a bear with a sore head. Why couldn't he put a good face on it, as the Princess did? She had been obliged to part from her old love, but she didn't let it spoil all her enjoyment of life—not she.

As will have been observed, Caerleon's task was not made easier by his *fiancée*. Princess Ottilie saw the full comedy of the situation, where he perceived only its tragic irony, and she took a lively pleasure in emphasising the details of the plot. A born actress, no mere tame acceptance of facts would content her, and she played shamelessly to the gallery. Ordinary love-making was poor,—everything for her must be intense, and surcharged with meaning. She never let Caerleon alone. Loving epithets flowed from her lips in a way that made him feel that he must be blushing scarlet a dozen times a-day. She claimed his time and attention as a right, obliged him to assist her in the most incongruous tasks, made him turn over the pages of her music for her for what seemed interminable hours (she was a most accomplished musician), and appealed in an injured tone to Cyril, or the Queen, or the ladies-in-waiting, if he showed signs of fatigue or preoccupation. The general effect produced was that of a modern and substantial Titania wooing a singularly unresponsive clown, to the great edification of the beholders.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF BLUNDERS.

THE "Blunders of Philosophy" would doubtless furnish a wider and a deeper theme, and at the same time a more familiar one, than the "Philosophy of Blunders." But as the number of blunderers is probably considerably larger than the number of philosophers, and as it may be more comforting to believe that there is philosophy in most blunders than that there are blunders in most philosophies, there may be a certain advantage in adhering to the title of this paper rather than its converse.

The whole subject of the Philosophy of Blunders, it must be confessed at the outset, is at once too wide for this paper and too deep for its writer. The blunders to be discussed are only some of those which come under the notice of an examiner in the course of oral and written examinations of various grades.

The process of examination may be regarded as a kind of thinking by proxy, or of co-operative thinking, either in the form of reminiscence or of reasoning. If the examination is mainly on matters of fact, or a revisal of matter previously committed to memory, it takes the form of remembering by proxy. If the questions assume the form of what would be described in arithmetic as a problem, or in geometry as a rider, the process is that of reasoning by proxy. That is, of course, looking at it from the examiner's point of view. From the side of the *examiné* there is, unfortunately, nothing vicarious in the proceeding—it is severely personal.

The expression "thinking by proxy," however unjustifiable or inexact, has been used to bring

out the fact that the examiner does not merely *ask questions*, as one would do who desires information. His mind has already performed a certain course of reminiscence or of reasoning regarding the subject under review. He then initiates the same process in the mind of the pupil or candidate by suggesting to him the first links of the same chain of thinking, with the object of discovering how far that mind is qualified by training and information to complete the chain.

Now it is clear that the required chain of reminiscence may fail in the case of the pupil from a variety of causes. In the first place, there may be ignorance of certain facts or events embraced in it. Again, the clue given by the examiner may be insufficient to suggest the next link in the series; and this may result either from a real defect in the form of the question, or from a relative defect as regards some individual pupil who has been accustomed to a more suggestive form of question. Or again, at some point in the chain, some irrelevant series of ideas may appear instead of that expected by the examiner, due to a misleading association in the pupil's mind—this arising either from some want of clearness in the teaching, or from misapprehension of it, when the subject was first presented to the pupil.

The performance of a chain of reasoning, which is more or less new to the pupil, may also fail from various causes. Some of the more obvious may be mentioned. The data supplied by the examiner may be insufficient, misleading, or misapprehended. There may be a

weakness of the reasoning power which might fairly have been expected from the pupil, either general or confined to the subject of examination. Or there may be a want of information as to the subject, or an imperfect memory of the facts required, due to any of the various sources of incorrect reminiscence mentioned in the preceding paragraph.

So much for the more obvious causes of partial failure in this process of thinking by proxy—thinking begun by the examiner and continued by the pupil for him. Partial failure is all that concerns us at present. Total failure does not amount to blunder or error, which is always a partial truth. Mere ignorance is never equivalent to blunder: that is always error or falsehood masquerading in the garb of truth. It is literally a mis-take. In mere ignorance there is nothing to take, either amiss or otherwise. The pupil who is merely ignorant of a subject, and knows he is ignorant of it, does not blunder; he holds his peace. It is he who is ignorant, and does not know it, that cheers the examiner's heart with those refreshing blunders, the gleaming of which is sometimes supposed to form the favourite occupation of professional examiners.

It has already been stated that any stoppage or divergence of the desired train of thought may be due to the examiner as well as to the pupil. It may even be broadly asserted that in perhaps a majority of cases of blunder, as distinct from mere failure to answer, the examiner is responsible rather than the pupil. The latter takes the words of the former literally, and without the qualification which an adult mind would probably feel to be necessary; the result is, from the examiner's point of view, a

blunder. But in dealing with immature minds one should be careful to say what he means. Examples of blunders due to this cause will doubtless be easily recalled by such readers as have had anything to do with elementary school-work. One may be quoted. A little boy in the course of his reading lesson came to the word "widow," and called it "window," a word more familiar to him. The teacher, who was acting as examiner, corrected the blunder, and then, wishing to improve the occasion, put the question, "What is the difference between 'widow' and 'window'?" The boy's answer began, "You can see through a widow, but——" and then stopped. The amusement plainly visible on the teacher's face prevented this miniature Sam Weller from completing the contrast. Now, the blunder here, so far as it was a blunder, was entirely due to the teacher. He did not mean to impress on his pupils the transparency of a window as contrasted with a widow, but the difference in spelling between the two words.

The following instance, taken from a school in the same village as that just referred to, though it is not an actual case of blunder, serves to illustrate the fact that the younger mind is sometimes the more accurate. The teacher of an infant class was talking to her children one morning about birds. The fact had been dwelt on that birds have wings where we have arms, and that by these wings they have the power of flying. In winding up the lesson, just before dismissing the class for lunch, the following question was put, in order to stimulate the imagination of the children regarding the subject, "Now, would you not all like to have wings, as the birds have, so that you could

fly straight home as soon as you get out!" There was a chorus of assent, but one cautious little fellow shook his head and answered "No." "Why not?" asked his teacher, surprised.—"Because I could not *sup*." And this little dissentient had alone grasped the bearings of the question. The choice suggested was wings in place of arms and hands: had it been wings in addition to these he would have felt safe to answer Yes; but without hands how could he sup his kail or his porridge? Better walk home with that pleasure in view than fly home without it.

Besides the unconsciously incomplete question in examining or in teaching, we often have the intentionally incomplete question, or elliptical question, as it is technically called. It is not really a question at all, but a form of the "missing word competition," which still survives. The examiner makes a statement which he asks the children to complete for him. The clue is either so obvious as to make the exercise quite worthless for the end in view, or else so obscure that nothing but a lucky guess can discover the missing word. In either case it is worthless for the purposes of examination, and pernicious for those of teaching. The following is selected from among many as an example of how this kind of question sometimes works. The subject of lesson was the "Miraculous draught of fishes." "Simon said, 'We have toiled all night and caught nothing,'" quoted the teacher; "then they let down the net, and enclosed a great multitude of fishes: now, then, Simon was a——?" "Disciple," replied one lad. "Apostle," another suggested; but these answers were waved aside. The quotation was given again, and this time the

apparently pertinent answer "Fisherman" was offered, but not accepted. The class was now quite at a loss to see what particular aspect of Simon was in the teacher's mind. One more trial he made, emphasising the contrast between "catching nothing" and "enclosing a great multitude of fishes." One boy saw the contrast clearly now, and drew a startling conclusion; "now, then," the teacher repeated, "Simon was a——?" "Leear," replied the boy, and for the sake of euphony we leave the answer in the boy's own dialect. The teacher was somewhat shocked, no doubt, and the class somewhat amused, but the question was not answered. And so the teacher began the quotation again, this time filling up the ellipsis himself, "Now, then," he concluded, "Simon was *a-stonished*." And no doubt so were the pupils, as well as the other listeners.

Another question may be quoted, not, indeed, elliptical, but admitting a yet wider variety of answers. The young teacher wished to lead up to the word "Labour," the subject of his proposed lesson, and began, "If anybody does anything, what does he do?" No articulate answer was offered to that question.

Coming next to blunders for which the examiner cannot be held responsible, it must be admitted that many of these defy classification. But they generally fall into two groups—those due to defective memory, and those due to defective reasoning. In so far as there is error and not mere failure to answer, these might be otherwise described generally as the substitution of reasoning for memory, and the substitution of memory for reasoning. By far the most numerous group will be found to be that which consists of blunders

due to the substitution of memory for reasoning. This is the most common type of blunder due to defective training in reasoning, the remainder of this genus usually consisting of blunders due to reasoning from a false analogy. But the substitution of reasoning for memory is perhaps productive of specimens which are more amusing.

In the examples immediately following, defective memory and analogical reasoning are together responsible for the blunders. The child was in each case expected to answer from memory, as the matter had been previously explained in the class.

In the first instance, the subject of examination was Jesus and the disciples on the shore of the Sea of Galilee. "What were they doing on the sea-shore?" was asked. "Gathering buckies," was the answer given by a child, whose recollection of the sea-shore was more vivid than that of his previous lesson.

The second example comes from the same school. In rehearsing the story of the Nativity at Bethlehem, the question was put, "Why was there no room in the inn?" "Because it was pay-day," came at length from a little fellow, who seemed to know well the appearance of the "inn" on the fortnightly pay-day in the mining village where he lived.

The third example of this kind is drawn from a northern Sunday-school. The subject of lesson was the triumphal entry into Jerusalem. "Why did the people strew palm-branches in the way?" asked the teacher. One pupil, impressed no doubt by the hostility of one section of the Jews rather than by the enthusiasm of the other, gave the startling explanation, "To trip the cuddy."

This kind of blunder, it may be noted, is perhaps more common in Scripture lessons than in any other kind. And the reasons for this are plain. Analogies from personal experience are certain to mislead when applied to scenes so different in every way. At the same time, and often for the same reason, the subjects are less clearly understood, and less vividly present to the imagination, so that memory has to work under serious disadvantages. In such a case memory must be almost entirely verbal memory, and verbal memory does not seem to satisfy intelligent children. They refuse to be mere tablets on which words may be recorded. If the words convey no meaning, they will put a meaning into them, right or wrong. Some such instinct it must have been that led a little boy recently to repeat the children's favourite psalm with a variation of his own, thus—

"My table Thou hast furnished
With presents from my foes"

—not an unreasonable rendering if he had ever read the story of "spoiling the Egyptians."

Similar reasons help to make the subject of history a fruitful source of blunders among children. The memory is apt to be purely a verbal memory, which is always apt to lead to more or less ludicrous errors. But unfortunately children do not have any monopoly in this class of blunder. Some of the quotations which follow are taken from the papers of pupil-teachers seeking admission to training colleges, and the others from those of students who had been in training in these colleges for one or two years. In each blunder the point where memory began to go wrong is easily seen, and the slip is generally due to a

similarity in sound between two words.

"Tyre was destroyed by fire and brimstone; its site is covered by the Dead Sea." The groups "Tyre and Sidon" and "Sodom and Gomorrha" had evidently got mixed up.—"John Wesley joined the navy in 1779, and by degrees rose to be Duke of Wellington." John Wesley is here, as is not at all uncommon in such papers, confounded with Sir Arthur Wellesley, and the navy has been put in place of the army.—"Pope is celebrated for his *Essays on Man* and on the *Human Understanding*." This is quite a typical example of the results of cramming up literary history. A more extreme case of confusion may be added: "Sir Thomas More lived in the reign of William; he was a great poet; some of his poems were '*Cælebs in Search of a Wife*,' '*Ye Mariners of England*,' and '*The Descent of Man*.' He was also one of the greatest preachers of his time." Such answers will continue to be given so long as students are encouraged or allowed to discuss, criticise, classify, or even mention works which they have never seen, much less read. The name More is frequently confused with Moore, and Moore the poet with Sir John Moore, as in the following: "Sir Thomas More, a famous general, born in Ireland, wrote several essays and poems. He was killed at the battle of Corunna." Further examples of confusion of names may be given: "Gibraltar was seized by Richard Hooker," instead of Admiral Rooke;—"Charles I. imprisoned nine members; among these was George Eliot," instead of Sir John Elliot—this not an uncommon blunder among women students;—"The Maid of Norway was the granddaughter of Alexander the

Great," for Alexander I.;—"Pym was a companion of Hampden in the ship called the *Pilgrim Fathers* which sailed to America in 1620," where the confusion of the name given to the passengers with that of the ship is responsible for part of the blunder;—"The Culdees were fire-worshippers," possibly the name Parsees was in the student's mind here;—"Their religion [that of the ancient Britons] was Druidism, and they firmly believed in Transubstantiation," perhaps transmigration of souls is meant. The following answers show the result of memorising historical or political events without understanding their import: "The evidences which still remain of the Roman occupation are the building of houses and the making of shoes," arts which are said to have been introduced among the ancient Britons by the Romans;—"In 1867 the Second Reform Act was passed, which conceded fair rents, fixity of tenure, and free sale of public holdings," in which among other things there is evidence that the technical meaning of "Reform" is unknown. Even chronology, which is the crammer's strong point, goes astray under the effort to reproduce statements seen somewhere in a text-book. For example, "During the reign of Queen Elizabeth one of her most able supporters was Cranmer, a Protestant. During the reign of Queen Mary, Cranmer was burned for heresy," a statement made by a student who could not possibly be ignorant of the fact that Mary's reign preceded that of Elizabeth. Again, "Montfort was the chief man in getting the Constitutions of Clarendon passed in 1158, fought at Lewes in 1264, was killed in 1265," a statement made by one who must have been aware that she was assigning to the good

Earl a public career of 107 years. But these students had determined to rely on memory for their answers, and it did not occur to them to apply their common-sense to check the result.

In subjects of a scientific cast, blunders, it might be expected, would arise chiefly from faulty reasoning. But experience shows that in examination papers they are almost entirely due to the absence of reasoning, and to the substitution of an attempt to remember phrases and statements seen in the text-book, even when these are glaringly inapplicable. And however ungallant it may be to say so, experience seems to indicate that this vice is more prevalent among women than among men students. Papers in Euclid, among others, indicate this. Girls are more ready than boys to inform the examiner that "a circle is a figure bounded by one straight line," and perhaps only a girl could have defined a point as "that which has length and breadth but no magnitude." In arithmetical problems more errors are due to this tendency than to incorrect figuring. Memory suggests a "rule" apparently applicable to the terms of the problem, and this rule is applied with a trust so implicit that the result is never examined in the light of common-sense. So the examiner is informed, for example, that an ounce of tea costs as many pounds as it should do pence, or that a poor-rate of over twenty shillings in the pound, instead of as many pence, is necessary to raise a given sum. But these blunders are too common to require illustration.

Geography, more especially in its physical aspect, is the subject which perhaps affords the best opportunities for science teaching, among all the subjects of the ele-

mentary school curriculum. It, therefore, provides most pitfalls for those who aim at producing a maximum of "results" with a minimum of thinking. Blunders in this subject give ample evidence that "science falsely so called" did not pass away with the apostolic age.

The explanation of common physical phenomena such as the seasons, day and night, the tides, and so forth, form part of the course of study in most schools, and of pupil-teachers and students in training colleges, so that those matters could not have been new to any of the writers whose remarks are now to be quoted as illustrations of blunders in reasoning combined with memory.

One training college student explains that "we have summer in this country when the North Pole is turned towards the equator," a condition which, if indispensable, would make our chances of fine weather somewhat worse than they really are. Another says that during summer "the weather is getting gradually warmer, caused by the rotation of the sun." It is hard to see what the writer meant to say. A third paper informs us that "the more we increase our longitude, the more we increase the cold." The confusion here is chiefly between longitude and latitude. Regarding the position of the Tropic of Cancer, one writer says, "The Tropic of Cancer is situated north and south of the equator," a blunder which it is difficult to account for rationally; while an equally confused statement is that "the Tropic of Cancer is the meridian which passes round the earth midway between the equator and the Tropic of Capricorn." Nor is it much more easy to disentangle this answer, "Longitude is the means by which we can tell the

position of a place east or west of the Poles." In another of the same series of papers this fact is announced, "If by any means or other (*sic*) we could have vegetable life in the north of Africa and Arabia, then we should not have such deserts," which no one would attempt to dispute. But science has not only proved inadequate to explain the less known phenomena; it has sometimes served to confuse what was previously well enough understood, as in the case of the student who says, "A solar day is the length of time between the sun's rising and setting,"—this is a blunder of little consequence so far, as it may be due to mere ignorance of what the term "solar day" is used to express, but the serious part of the answer follows,—"it is twenty-four hours." Surely no intelligent young woman of eighteen or twenty would assert the time between sunrise and sunset to be twenty-four hours unless she supposed that science required her to say so. Memory misled her into the belief that this statement was made somewhere in her text-book—therefore, down it goes: this was a paper in which science was required, not common-sense.

The same spirit of simple faith in memory, when it bears false witness regarding the text-book, seems responsible for the following varied explanations of the phenomena of the tides or the tidal wave: "Tides are caused by evaporation"—"by prevailing winds"—"by different oceans meeting each other"—"by the undercurrents meeting"—"by the different temperatures"—"by the waves of the Atlantic pushing the surface waters westward." Of the students who show a better understanding of the subject, several fall into a somewhat amusing error,

perhaps a slip of the pen, but one which does not occur among the papers of male students. The influence exerted by the moon upon the waters of the earth is explained as being due to the moon's "attractions." The recurrence of this slip in several papers raises the question whether it is really a mere slip of the pen, or whether the fair writers regard what is popularly described by the word "attractions" as being the universal drawing-power in nature, animate and inanimate alike; and one might wish to know if any writer holding that creed also believes in the "attractions of gravity."

It is easy to trace the cause of error in such students as say that the tidal wave exists in China or in the tropics; but the following account defies all analysis: "Tides are caused by the rising and falling of the ocean. The great tidal wave begins in the Mediterranean Sea, rushes up the Atlantic Ocean, and goes right on through all the other oceans and seas till it reaches London, where it comes with great force into the Thames." Another answer in the same series illustrates several of the causes of error already mentioned, notably the complete divorce of science from common-sense; but its real interest lies in the fact that it was written by one who had completed a term of apprenticeship as pupil-teacher in a school in a seaport town on the tidal estuary of one of our great rivers. "Tides are caused by the rays of the sun and moon acting upon the earth. . . . The rays of the sun and moon draw the waters together, and they form a sort of wall." . . . After confusing neap-tides with low water, the statement ends thus: "A good example of this may be seen on any of our

rivers; when it is full tide on one side, the other is low."

We gather from another paper, however, that we are advancing in knowledge from age to age; for while "the ancients thought the world was round," we now know that "the sun never stands still. It is continually making a circuit round the earth."

The political aspects of geography seem to be more easily mastered; or rather it may be said that while physical and political geography are alike matters of memory, the facts of political geography can be more easily committed to memory without being understood. Errors in this department are chiefly in proper names; for example, the Black Forest is located in "Badenoch in the south of Germany," and the Mahavelli-Ganga, a river in Ceylon, is described as the "Machiavelli-Ganglia," a name full of whimsical suggestion, as if the writer believed that the nerve-centres which were characteristic of the Italian philosopher must have a geographical parallel in the island "where only man is vile."

There is perhaps only one country, and that not Holland, where one would expect to hear of windmills driven by water, but a candidate for admission to a training college informs the examiner that "Holland is adorned with windmills near the canals, which work the machinery." Holland comes in for a good deal of misrepresentation among the same batch of papers. One candidate believes that "the mouths of the Danube, which has a very large delta, the Rhine, and the Loire, all flow through Holland." Some such belief it must have been that led another to say, "There is more water than land in Holland." As an example of carefully detailed

inaccuracy, the following takes a high rank: "Holland is bounded on the north by the Baltic Sea and Denmark, on the east by Hungary and Russia, on the south by France and Spain, and on the west by the Irish Sea and St George's Channel." Can the writer of that description have been under the impression that she knew anything at all about the situation of Holland? It is difficult to think so, after one reads it in view of the map of Europe.

Among all the quasi-scientific subjects of the teacher's curriculum, domestic economy stands easily first in providing pitfalls for the student. Nor is this to be wondered at, considering the great and catholic width of the so-called "subject." Political economy is an exact science in comparison with it. Laundry-work and life-insurance, dressmaking and dietetics, savings-banks and sanitation, house-work and hygiene, physiology and "first aid,"—all these and more invite the young teacher's attention, and lie in wait for her at her professional examinations. Her two years' training might be profitably spent in this subject alone, apart from the crowd of other subjects, to each of which an equal or larger number of marks is attached in her annual examination. The examples which follow are taken from papers written by students who had finished their two years' training, and were being examined for their professional certificates.

One curious symptom of the overthrow of common-sense by science in such a study is the fact that the papers are frequently marked by grotesque misspellings, not merely of scientific terms, but even more especially of common words which in other papers would present no difficulty what-

ever. This is a mark of the papers of senior schoolgirls who study the subject of domestic economy as well as of older students, and to such an extent that an examiner is forced to the conclusion that this study is in some occult way a danger to orthography. To invest in "consuls," to have the fingernails neatly "paired," "poodles" of water, "minch meat," "roasted stake," to have the drains "slushed" with water, and to break a class up into "draughts," may be taken as a few examples of this tendency. But scientific terms are by no means safe from variations, as the two following quotations, this time from the papers of schoolgirls, will show: "Oar bonny cassid" is an unusual but yet recognisable form of carbonic acid. "Lack tail ducks" may not be so easily recognised; one might suppose that it referred to a species of waterfowl, related in some way to the Manx cat, but it is really intended for lacteal ducts. Possibly the functions of these vessels was no less a mystery to the writer than the spelling of their name.

That such a *pot-pourri* of science should lead to much confused thinking is only to be expected, and confused thinking is not favourable to clear expression. Many papers afford examples of confused expression, and these papers by no means deficient in merit otherwise. For example, one student explains that a person whose life has been insured at a certain rate "gets £100 at death." Another gives rules to "prevent overspenditure," a word whose meaning lies on the surface, if not found in our dictionaries. Those on holiday are advised in one instance to take every advantage of "the embracing air."

The wish for brevity leads one to say that French women use

"their own clarified fat" in cooking, and another that a school kitchen should have "space enough to allow six or eight girls to cook at once," while yet another tells us that a certain dish may be "eaten cold twice." Such ambiguities are probably due more to haste than to any other cause, and are hardly to be classed as absolute blunders, notwithstanding the anthropophagous suggestions of the two first.

The most common type of blunder, naturally, is the use of the wrong word. This is sometimes due to the use of one unknown (or meaningless) term for another; sometimes, again, to the substitution of a word which has some meaning for another which has none, so far as the writer's knowledge goes. A few examples of such substitutions are the following: "The vessel, crew, and cargo must be thoroughly disinfected with hydrochloric acid," probably a more effective if less pleasant treatment than disinfection with chloride of lime, or whatever may have suggested the term; a teacher "finds his energy flag, and finds himself becoming disinterested and exhausted,"—an unexpected moral result from hard work, or from having "to baffle against a vitiated atmosphere," as another paper has it; disease-stricken ships should be "kept in quadrantine," and the passengers "not allowed to come on shore until after a fortnight's furlough," which puts the case in rather euphemistic form; "cholera is a preventative disease," we find in one paper, while another says that some people think that "it is merely a disturbed state of the atmosphere." A sheet "which has been diluted with carbonic acid" will easily suggest what the expression should have been, and "treatment which rendered the

disease invulnerable ever after" will also be easily recognised as a case of transference of epithet. Even "a pleasant action of the skin which proves refreshing and enervating," shows marks of groping in the right direction for a term; and the slip is evident in "what an Englishwoman would throw away, a Frenchwoman would neutralise in her soup."

The importance of a good water-supply is recognised by all the writers, but their remarks regarding this matter are in one or two cases suggestive of sarcasm; for example, "The water that is used is carefully analysed, and when anything is found likely to cause disease, it is entirely disregarded;" and "The water communication should be stopped, as water is the greatest carrier of the germs of typhoid fever."

Papers in this subject also contain an unusual proportion of expressions somewhat suggestive of the Emerald Isle; for example, "Every house not yet infected should be disinfected;" "The body is covered with little holes;" "Girls of all ages;" "The nurse should not mix with any one except the doctor;" "For tea she might get a little cocoa;" and "One breath of pure morning air is worth a dozen of moonlight." The following is a more detailed example of the same type, the reference being to penny dinners at school: "Each child receives a good deal more than a pennyworth, but the loss is not great when a great many children buy." Outside a "scientific" paper this statement could never have been made by the writer. Even Bible knowledge is not proof against the infection of this confused thinking, for in several cases, and in papers from more than one college, the saying that "Cleanliness is next

to godliness" is credited with an inspired origin.

In the subject of Domestic Economy, one feels that blunders such as the preceding should be regarded with great leniency. What is gained in breadth must be lost in depth. But the further question may arise, whether the net gain has any appreciable magnitude, after the loss is deducted. True, a good many useful bits of information may be gained, but even these seem to be mingled with a number of rather dangerous errors. Perhaps a more serious aspect of the matter is, that there is so evident a sacrifice of training and education for the sake of mere empirical knowledge.

With respect to many of the blunders quoted from students' papers, the question may arise, as was previously suggested, Did the writer *suppose* he was answering the question asked? Or was the answer merely an attempt to gain some credit for a knowledge which he was conscious of not possessing?

This question is really a wide-reaching and important one,—a question which rarely arises to mar one's enjoyment of the stumbles which children make in their mental gymnastics. The blunders of children are always interesting and instructive, and in the hands of a teacher who can form a true diagnosis of the cause of error, they are of the greatest possible value. They each mark a doubtful point on the road, and serve as finger-posts to guide into the high-way instead of the byway on future excursions. To the examiner, blunders may be indications of a higher intellectual power than correct answers would have been. Correct answers on a prepared syllabus of work *may* be due largely to memory, perhaps a

transient and valueless memory, but a really *intelligent* blunder is always an evidence of original thought.

But the higher examinations quoted from are, to a certain extent, professional examinations, and on the results of them the student's professional career and emoluments may, to a certain extent, depend. So the question arises, more of a moral than an intellectual question, Is this a *bond fide* blunder? Did the writer suppose that this answers the question? Or does he know that he cannot answer the question, but know also that he *cannot afford* to leave it unanswered? Is he not merely "having a shy" at it in order to secure a few stray marks for his total? And if the blunder be, like so many quoted already, a hopeless confusion regarding things perfectly well known even to very imperfectly educated people, this question is apt to take

the form of an awkward dilemma: Has his education merely blunted his common-sense? Or has it blunted his moral sense also?

To condemn a whole system of education because it produces a few results such as these here discussed, would be of course a blunder as well as an injustice. So would it be to lay the blame on the particular educators by whose students these statements were made—although it is said that in China when a man is guilty of parricide, his teacher is put to death along with him; and even Socrates was not held blameless for the vagaries of Alcibiades. Were we dealing with the whole philosophy of blunders, it might indeed be necessary to inquire whether something in our system of education were not the original and fundamental blunder, and the cause of many others,—but that is another story, as Rudyard Kipling says.

A CONTEMPORARY OF SALADIN.

I.

THE present century has seen the discovery of many MSS. of the greatest importance, and this not merely in the provinces of theology and classical learning, but also in that of medieval history. Every one knows how Constantine Tischendorf's lucky arrival in the Monastery of St Catherine on Mount Sinai saved what is perhaps the oldest manuscript of the Greek New Testament from destruction by fire; and how, only two years ago, from the same treasure-house of antiquity, Mrs Lewis recovered a still earlier Syriac palimpsest of the same work, concealed under the "super-scripture" of a comparatively modern Martyrology. Most people, too, whether Biblical scholars or not, know something of the romance attending the discovery of the long-lost 'Diatessaron' of Tatian in the library at the Vatican; and how the sands of Egypt have, hardly ten years ago, yielded up the apocryphal Gospel of St Peter. In matters classical, too, it is much the same. Thousands of people who are not, in any sense of the word, classical scholars have heard how the ruins of Egyptian cities have given us fragments of the 'Iliad' in a handwriting some two or three centuries before Christ, and large portions of the long-lost poems of Herondas. Yet hardly any one, save a professed medievalist here and there, knows of

the romance attending the discovery of medieval documents: how the history of the tenth century has had to be almost rewritten owing to the discovery of the "autograph" of the work of the tenth-century historian Richer; or how a Prague savant just succeeded in saving the priceless contemporary record of Frederick Barbarossa's crusade from the scissors of a country-town apothecary. And, to come to English matters, how many Englishmen know of the late discovery of the long historical French poem dealing with the life of the great Earl Marshal, the hero of Magna Charta? Or, more remarkable still, the recovery of the history of Richard Cœur-de-Lion's Crusade, as told in the verses of his own chaplain and follower, Ambrose the priest?

All other discoveries in crusading matters are, however, thrown into the shade by that of M. Hartwig Derenbourg, the distinguished son of Dr Joseph Derenbourg, the Nestor of French orientalists.¹ This scholar, while working at the Arabic MSS. in the Escorial, noticed more than one volume made up of the *débris* of tattered books. One of these miscellaneous volumes contained, amongst other matter, a single quire—originally of ten leaves—written in an early thirteenth-century hand. This quire was numbered as the eighth, so that evidently seven other

¹ When this article left the writer's hands, in the first half of 1895, the venerable author of the '*Essai sur l'Histoire et la Géographie de la Palestine d'après les Thalmuds*' was still alive. Since that time he has been gathered to his rest—dying, by a somewhat curious coincidence, almost on the eight hundredth centenary of Osama's birth, July 29, 1895.

quires, or seventy leaves, must be missing. A cursory examination of the text showed M. Derenbourg that he had stumbled on a work dealing with crusading times. *Here* he found a curse invoked upon the invading Franks; *there* he found dates corresponding to 1137 and 1153 of our Christian era; while elsewhere he could read the names of familiar personages, such as Ibn As Sallar, the famous vizier of Egypt, and his stepson, the ill-fated Abbas. M. Derenbourg's quire consisted of only nine leaves (instead of ten), and of these nine leaves only the first eight were consecutive; between the eighth leaf and the ninth there was a gap. This ninth leaf proved the key for unlocking the whole problem as to the authorship of the work and its scribe; and another quire wound up with a colophon declaring that the scribe had written out the volume at the direction of his grandfather Murhaf, "the perfect chief, the friend of kings and sultans." The book was the autobiography of Murhaf's own father, the famous poet-statesman Osama; and to guarantee the accuracy of the copy in question, Murhaf had signed the volume with his own name, guaranteeing its accuracy in every way, at his grandson's request, on Thursday, 4th July 1213. Thus M. Derenbourg had before him a fragment of Osama's autobiography, apparently a copy written out by Osama's great-grandson, with the approval of Osama's own son, Murhaf. Somewhat later M. Derenbourg found other quires of the same work grouped together in another volume of miscellaneous contents. Bit by bit he pieced the scattered fragments into one, till at last he had Osama's work complete in his hands, from the twenty-second leaf to the eightieth and last. Unluckily, the first quarter

of the work (twenty leaves) is lost; nor is it likely now that it will ever be recovered. One single copy of the book has floated down to us on the stream of time, and it is matter for congratulation that so much has been preserved rather than for regret that so much has been lost.

Such is the history of the discovery of Osama's autobiography—a discovery that has a special interest for us at the present moment, seeing that we have recently passed the eight hundredth anniversary of Osama's birthday, 4th July 1095. But, besides the interest of the moment, Osama's autobiography is of a peculiar and permanent importance to all who take an interest in the history of our race. Osama's life covered—precisely covered—what is perhaps the most remarkable period of medieval history, the period which is *par excellence* the Crusading Age. He was born just four *months* before Urban II. called the first crusade into existence at the Council of Olermont: just four *years* before the first crusaders conquered Jerusalem. For nearly a hundred years he lived a life of active warfare or of active intellectual endeavour, and at last died, almost a centenarian, just thirteen months after his friend and patron Saladin had won back the Holy City from the worshippers of Christ for the servants of Mahomet. His life more than covered the duration of the first kingdom of Jerusalem. He was the contemporary, and in some cases the friend, not merely of the heroes of the first crusade,—the Tancreds, the Boamunds, the Baldwins,—but also of Fulk of Anjou, the grandfather of our English Henry II., of Fulk's great seneschal William de Bures, the lord of Galilee, of Fulk's great enemies Zangi of Mosul and his greater son Nur-ed-din,

of Nur-ed-din's faithful lieutenant Shirkuh, the conqueror of Egypt, and of Shirkuh's greater nephew Saladin himself—the model of Eastern chivalry, the ideal Mohammedan prince to whom Christendom in later ages might well have applied the noble eulogy pronounced by Sir Hector on his dead brother Lancelot: "Thou wert the courtliest knight that ever bare shield; and thou wert the kindest man that ever strake with sword."

Osama's autobiography is the counterpart of Joinville's 'Life of St Louis'—only that its contents are far more varied and its value greater, owing to the fact that it throws so much light into dark corners. Both writers lived to be wellnigh a hundred; both were valiant warriors and capable statesmen; both, at the close of their long life, took up the pen to record the recollections of their youth. But the intellectual activity of Osama was far greater than that of the Sieur de Joinville, just as the intellectual activity of the East in those days was far greater than that of the Latin West. Both were something of theologians as well as historians; but Osama was a poet too and a teacher—functions to which the homely Frenchman could lay little claim. And while the interest of Joinville's 'Vie de St Louis' is almost confined to the pious king himself, the interest of Osama's work centres in the writer himself—though this interest is vivified and diversified on every page by the association of far greater historic names, such as those of Tancred, Baldwin, Zangi, Nur-ed-din, and Saladin.

Osama was born at Cæsarea on the Orontes—that great river which, to Juvenal and his contemporaries, stood as a synonym for Eastern superstition and Eastern corruption. There, where the "rebel river," as if in scorn of the mandate laid by Allah upon all his brother-streams,¹ runs north from Hamah to the Iron Bridge, he spent the days of his childhood and his youth. His grandfather, Nasr, was lord of Cæsarea and the neighbouring towns during the closing years of the eleventh century; and the traditions of his family told Osama many tales of the fortunes of his ancestors during the eventful years when the great Seljukian empire was rising to its apogee. Almost all Osama's ancestors and kinsmen were men of books as well as men of action. Such were his great-grandfather Ali and his grandfather Nasr. Such, above all else, was Osama's own father Murshid, who, had he cared to do so, might have succeeded to the lordship of Cæsarea in 1098. So responsible an office, however, was not suited to his taste; he could not face the responsibilities of government. "By Allah," he used to declare, "never will I exercise command; for I wish to leave this world as pure as I was when I entered it." And so Murshid resigned his rights to his younger brother Sultan, and spent the remaining forty years of his life in study and in hunting. "My father," says Osama, "used to divide his day between reading, fasting, and the chase; during the night he used to copy out the book of Allah." It was an age when even princes prided themselves on the beauty of their handwriting, and took lessons in

¹ The Arabs call the Orontes "the rebellious river" because, unlike most of the other streams best known to them, it flows north.

this difficult art. Two of Murshid's Korans were written out in gold, and were of so transcendent a workmanship that one of the greatest of contemporary scholars declared that he had never seen anything comparable to them. Murshid was indefatigable in his self-imposed task, and when he died gave orders that all the copies he had not given away should be buried in his tomb—where he wished to sleep out his last sleep with his cheek resting on the Word of God.

Murshid, the poet and lover of learning, was very solicitous as to the education of his children. For Osama he procured the services of two of the greatest scholars of the age—Abu-abd Allah of Toledo and his namesake from Kafar-tab. The former of these scholars made a great impression on his pupil's mind. He had come from Spain to preside over the great library of Tripoli in Syria, and when Tripoli fell into the hands of the crusaders, he found a refuge at Cæsarea. His memory and his learning were marvellous.

"One day," says Osama, "I went to his house to read with him. Before him, as I entered, lay the chief treatises on [Arabic] syntax. 'O Sheikh,' I said, 'have you *really* read all these books?' 'Truly,' he replied, 'I have read them all; or rather, by Allah, I have copied them all out and learnt them by heart. Take up any you choose; open it [where you like] and read me a line from the first leaf.' I took a volume and did as he bade me; whereon he, for his part, carried on the quotation till he had finished the whole collection."

Osama, however, while admiring the profound learning of one of his tutors, was not blind to the weak points of the other, for whom he seems to have had a kind of half-contempt. "One day," he writes, "our conversation turned

upon fighting while my master Abu-abd Allah [of Kafar-tab] was listening close by. 'O my master,' I said, 'if you were mounted on your horse with sword and lance and coat of mail, and, thus accoutred, you took your place in some defile of the Orontes through which the Franks had to pass—not one of them would escape.'" "By Allah," cried the peaceful man of letters, "you are mistaken; they would *all* escape." "Nay," continued Osama in his chaff, "they would be in such a terror that they wouldn't know you." "Praise be to Allah," said the teacher, "I should not know myself [in such a guise]." Then, in a quicker tone, he added: "O Osama, a wise man never fights." To refute such a calumny as this the boy rolled off a list of the bravest warriors of his race, asking if these men were all fools in his master's opinion. "Such was not my meaning," said Abu-abd Allah, as he proceeded to explain away his words into an assertion that at the actual moment of combat a man must have forgotten what a wound is like or he would never expose himself to such peril. No wonder that Osama here adds a comment of his own: "My late teacher had more knowledge in matters of learning than in matters of war."

From his childhood Osama was dominated by a hasty temper. But even as a child he could be chivalrous and pitiful.

"One day," he writes, "I was standing at the door of my father's house—a boy not yet ten years old—when up there came one of my father's attendants, Mohammed, and gave a cuff to one of his fellow-servants. The latter, taking to his heels, came to me for protection. Soon the other attendant followed and gave his victim a second blow as he clung to my robe. I struck

Mohammed with the stick in my hand, but was flung back. On this I drew my knife and stabbed him in the left side. Down he fell, and the blood spurted out in jets. The wounded man turned yellow, shivered, and swooned. He was carried into the house and died before waking from his trance."

Such fits of passion were common to Osama's race; and some verses written by Murshid himself have reference to a similar occurrence, when he struck a dilatory slave with his sheathed sword—a blow of such force as to cause the man's death. The poor servant's family were carefully looked after by their master, who in his poem regrets that his hand had not been "chained to his neck" when he struck that fatal blow. Later still the sword with its scabbard came into Osama's possession, and acquired the name of "Jami's sword" in memory of the victim of his father's anger.

Murshid, though himself a scholar, left his son's literary education in the hands of specialists. Not so, however, as regards his son's training in manly exercises. Since the very dawn of history the Semitic prince has been a sportsman above all things. Eleven hundred years before Christ it was the boast of Tiglath-Pileser that he had slain almost a thousand lions with his own hands; and when the kingdom of Assyria was tottering to its fall, his successor, Assur-bani-pal—the Greek Sardanapalus—gloried to depict himself in the attitude of a lion-hunter on the walls of his great palace at Kujunjik. In Osama's days the lion, the panther, and the pard abounded in Palestine and

Syria; and it was a work of piety, both for Saracen and Frank, to exterminate these pests. Our author has many a strange tale to tell about the ravages of these savage beasts. One lion pounced upon a famous Frank knight as he was journeying from the neighbourhood of Cæsarea to Antioch and ate him up alive: "May Allah have no mercy on him!" More dreaded still was a panther that made its noonday resting-place in the window of a ruined church at Hounak. A Frank knight, named Sir Adam, undertook to extirpate this plague, and putting on his coat of mail, rode forth with shield and lance to rouse the monster from his mid-day sleep. But the panther from his window recess saw his enemy approach him; a single leap from the embrasure of the window landed him on the French knight's steed, and a very short time saw the would-be champion a corpse. It is with no little glee that Osama speaks of this panther as a Mohammedan crusader—"the panther that takes part in the holy war" against the infidel Christian.¹

If Osama took a special pride in anything, it was in his prowess as a lion-hunter.

"I have fought with lions," he tells us, 'countless times, and have slain so many that though I may have rivals in other respects, I have no equal here—in my knowledge of their ways. I know, for instance, that, in common with all other animals, the lion shuns the presence of a man, and is careless and lazy till he has received a wound. But once let him be attacked and he is truly a 'lion'; [yes] then he becomes a terror."

Osama, however, was not merely

¹ This scene will remind readers of Sir Walter Scott of the contest between Count Robert of Paris and the tiger—though the really historical Sir Adam was less fortunate in the issue of his struggle than his semi-historical prototype in the novel.

a hunter of the lion and the panther. These animals failing, he pursued, though it may be with slacker efforts, and perhaps with less delight, the hyena and the leopard; or, failing these, the less savage animals of his native land, such as the hare and the wild goat. Like his father, and indeed like almost all the princes of his day from the Atlantic to the Persian Sea, Osama was hardly less passionately addicted to hawking than to hunting. Murshid, too, like his son, was an enthusiast in all things that related to sport. Even his political journeys were enlivened in this way; and on his return from the Court of his father's suzerain, Malik Shah at Ispahan, he took with him certain birds of prey to cheer him on his way home. A weasel was used to start the game from the wayside bushes; and the young prince's gerfalcons pounced down upon the smaller game. Later still he ransacked the East as far as Constantinople in quest of hunting-dogs. It was indeed, to use Osama's own words, "his one occupation outside of his warfare with the Franks and his transcription of the book of Allah." No wonder, then, if these tastes of the father, Murshid, were reflected in the son, Osama.

Boyhood passed away and manhood came. During all these years the new lord of Cæsarea, Sultan, Osama's uncle, seems to have played a waiting game. In the thirty years of Frank supremacy and conquest (1098-1128) he trimmed his bark according to the wind. Now he would purchase immunity from the Frank lords of Antioch by the payment of an annual tribute; now he would be found fighting with the Saracen emirs of Aleppo, Damascus, or Mosul against the infidel invader. Osama's first experience of warfare — perhaps

rather as a spectator than an actual warrior—took place at the age of fourteen. The temporary truce with Antioch had expired, and Tancred led his army against Cæsarea. The two armies met beneath the walls of Cæsarea; and Osama has a curious tale to tell of the brutality of the Norman prince, Tancred, who lives in the pages of Tasso's great poem as the type of all that is chivalrous and noble. The Saracen host boasted two warriors of peculiar prowess. One of these flung himself into the thick of the fray; but the other, whose horse was in the hands of a veterinary surgeon, had to look on, fretting at his inactivity. At last he could bear his position no longer. He was standing in a house along with Murshid and Osama; turning to the former, he begged the loan of a steed and the necessary accoutrements. "Take your choice of a cuirass there," said Murshid, pointing to his mules that stood hard by, each bearing its load of cuirasses. Osama, standing behind his father, was a witness of all that followed. He saw the eager warrior, Hasanun by name, ransack the collection without finding a single mail-coat to fit him; then he saw the disappointed warrior burst forth upon the Franks all unarmoured as he was. A Frankish knight strove to bar his way, but all to no purpose. Hasanun, carried into the middle of the crusading host, was soon a prisoner. After inflicting every kind of torture on their captive, the Franks at last determined to put out his left eye. "But Tancred (may Allah curse him!) bade them put out the right eye instead, so that if ever he should lift his shield in battle he could see nothing. So they put out the man's right eye as Tancred had bidden them." After this Hasanun was ransomed

for a thousand pieces of gold and a splendid Arab horse belonging to Osama's father. Such were the tender mercies of a Christian prince.

As he grew older Osama took part in all the contests that were going on. He was a warrior by temperament, reckless of all danger, careless of his own life; as ready to put his body in deadly peril with the enemy as he had been to hazard it in combat with the wild beasts of the desert. His kinsmen looked upon his rash valour with dismay. At the moment of battle he lost all self-control, and time on time did his uncle Sultan warn him to guard against his besetting fault. For Osama was a true fatalist, and, even while praising his uncle's discretion, could hardly help observing that it is futile to think we can advance or retard the hour of death by any care or any folly: "Allah it is who has fixed the day of our departure." And so, with this feeling deep down in his heart, he was regardless of all danger. Time after time did he put his life in peril; and time after time did he issue from his wildest exploits unharmed, till at last, when ninety years old, he could speak of himself as a "stronghold" that had stood wellnigh a century's siege. One or two examples of his reckless daring may be given. He was hardly twenty years old when he saw a Frank knight unhorse a Saracen antagonist. Eager to save his fellow-countryman, Osama galloped up to the rescue. As he drew near he saw that the dismounted warrior was his own cousin Kamil. "Close to his side I drew up, and taking one foot from the stirrup, I bade him get up alongside of me. This done, I turned my horse west—away from Cæsarea. 'Whither away?' queried my cousin. 'After the man who

wounded you,' was my reply." Osama, indeed, was going to fling himself unsupported into the middle of the French army rather than let a Frank knight ride off to boast of having overthrown a Munkhidite; and it was only when Kamil forced the horse's head in an opposite direction that he gave up all thoughts of this mad undertaking. A few years later, under somewhat similar circumstances, he flung himself against another famous Frankish knight, and though almost unhorsed by the violence of his onset, rode back to his companions in full confidence that he had slain his man. Meanwhile his frightened squire hurried off to Cæsarea with the news that all Osama's squadron had been cut off except Osama himself; and Osama got back to Cæsarea to find his father cross-examining the various couriers from the battle—for Murshid had refused to believe that his son had played the coward. Next day there came a Frank knight to Cæsarea. *He had ridden twenty miles to see with his own eyes the young warrior who had dealt so sturdy a blow to the "knight Philip."* And it was then that Osama learnt how a happy accident had saved the life of the antagonist he fancied he had slain. After reading so many stories of our author's valour, it is somewhat disheartening to find that he could stoop to the dishonourable practice of mutilating his dead foes. Once when some Frankish warriors were drowned in the fords of the Orontes, Osama made a special effort to be present when the Saracen divers plunged into the river to bring up the corpses. As they lay upon the bank the thirst for vengeance woke in the young man's veins, and he demanded his uncle's leave to cut off the heads of these unfortunate men

and carry them as trophies into Cæsarea. "O my uncle," he asked, "are we not going to cut off these heads?" "Do it yourself," was Sultan's somewhat contemptuous reply, "but twenty will be enough."

And so the years passed away till Osama was thirty-three years old. Then the face of things began to change. The great sultan, Mahmud, sent a new lieutenant to Mosul, with strict orders to renew the war against the Christian infidel. With the coming of this new governor began the revival of Islam. Zangi commenced the work which Nur-ed-din his son was destined to continue and Saladin to accomplish; and with Zangi's arrival, the current of Osama's life, so to speak, discharges itself into a broader stream. Up till now his interests were local; henceforward they become, in a certain sense, cosmopolitan. For some ten years (1128-1138) he ceased to make Cæsarea his headquarters. He became one of Zangi's followers, and marched in the great atabek's armies on countless expeditions east and west and south. Along with his friend the elder Salah-ed-din he became one of the new conqueror's most trusted lieutenants, and, to quote his own words, could watch "the narrow crescents of Islam [once more] broaden out into a full moon." With Zangi "the Musulmans began to march more proudly, wearing the full robes of victory and drinking freely from the waters of conquest." This Mohammedan revival is a fact recognised by every writer of the time. It is no mere fancy on Osama's part, and in Arabic historians in the next century it becomes a commonplace: a commonplace which one of them puts into noble language when he

contrasts the days of Zangi's power with the days that preceded it—a time when "the happy star of the Musulmans was shadowed, the firmament of their might sundered, and the sun of their prosperity darkened."

Osama had more than one reason for leaving Cæsarea. Not only was he eager to take service with so great a warrior as Zangi; he had enemies in Cæsarea itself. His own verses teach us that he was banished from his native place—unjustly banished, it is true, if we may trust his own account, but still banished. "My enemies," so run the words of his complaint, "have laid to my charge things that I have never done or counselled. Never, by Allah! have I conceived of treachery like theirs. But the day of resurrection will show on whose side the fault is." For the next ten years Osama is an exile. At one moment we see him welcoming poets to his house at Mosul; at another he is following Zangi in his famous campaign against the calif of Bagdad. Then we find him serving in Zangi's expedition against Damascus and on terms of intimate friendship with Zangi's great lieutenant Salah-ed-din. Of Zangi, Osama's pages give us a portrait very like that given us by the great Arabic chronicler Ibn-al-Athir, whose father knew the atabek very well. Even Salah-ed-din, of whom Zangi said that "he fears neither God nor me," trembled at the thought of his master's displeasure. The watchman on the Tigris, sleeping at his post, found himself waked up suddenly from his midnight slumbers. His half-opened eyes saw that his disturber was Zangi making his wonted rounds: terror seized upon the slothful warder; his heart gave one wild

leap, and he fell down dead at his master's feet. Nor was it only the privates of his army that held their great leader in excessive fear. Osama heard the atabek sharply reproving Salah-ed-din for his excess of valour; and when, a little after, he suggested to his friend a sudden sally on the foe—offering himself to bear the brunt of the danger—he was met with a flat refusal: "You shall do nothing of the kind. To give me such advice one would think you had not heard Zangi chiding me."

Though serving in Zangi's army, Osama did not lose his love for his native city; and when in the spring of 1138 John Comnenus made his famous descent upon Cæsarea, he hurried home to defend his family. In this emergency his conduct presented a striking contrast to that of Zangi's lieutenant on the Orontes, Salah-ed-din; for this latter, on getting wind of the Greek emperor's approach, was for suddenly throwing up his command—though he had apparently no objection to leaving his son in the post of danger while he himself fled eastwards. Such poltroonery was more than Osama could bear. "Madman!" he cried, on hearing the news how Salah-ed-din had relinquished Hamah into Zangi's hands on the first threatening of danger. "Will not Zangi now be justified in saying that so long as there was any meat on the bones he gave, you accepted them gladly; but directly you had picked them bare, you flung them back upon his hands?" It was to no purpose that Salah-ed-din fumed against his friend's reproach, protesting that no one had ever used such language to him before. Osama rode off to Cæsarea, there to strain every nerve for the defence of his native city and his household.

Cæsarea was saved. The Greek troops were foiled, and the Greek emperor led back his baffled army. It might have been expected that Sultan would have been glad to make his peace with a nephew who had shown such fidelity and courage. But such was not the case. Sultan, as seems most probable, could never forget that, from one point of view, Osama was the head of his race; since it was only through the resignation of Osama's father, Murshid, that Sultan ruled in Cæsarea. It may well be that Osama did not forget this fact either, and that he cherished some secret ambition of supplanting or succeeding his uncle. Here, perhaps, we have the hidden cause of his exile—an exile which did not extend to his wife and family, for they continued to live at Cæsarea during all the years of Osama's absence at Mosul. Murshid was their protection so long as he lived. But Murshid was now dead. His long life came to an end during the siege of Cæsarea; and his last days were characteristic of the man. He was busy at his usual work of transcribing the Koran when a messenger brought him news of the expected invasion of John Comnenus. "O my God," was the old man's prayer, "I beseech Thee by the prophet to whom Thou didst reveal the secrets of this book, that, if Thou hast decreed the coming of the Greek emperor, Thou wilt take me from the world." The Greek emperor came; and a few days later Murshid breathed his last.

With Murshid's death he old rancour woke up once more in Sultan's breast. It was to no purpose that Osama almost ostentatiously withdrew himself from public matters, and exchanged the pleasures of warfare and politics for the pleasures of lion-hunting.

Sultan became jealous of his nephew's prowess, perhaps of his nephew's popularity. His anger was no secret, and Osama got many a warning of what was coming long before the blow fell. The vitality of the Munkhidite family—to which Osama belonged—was extraordinary. Many of its members lived to be almost a hundred, and Osama himself was ninety-seven when he died. At this time there was still living in Cæsarea an old lady—Osama's great-aunt—now wellnigh a centenarian. One midnight, as Osama was returning from a successful lion-hunt, she entered his house with a flaming torch in her hands. Osama sprang forward to kiss his aged relative's hand, but she poured out reproaches on him. "Why was he risking his life in these mad expeditions, which only served to rouse his uncle's anger?" It was to no purpose that Osama suggested that his

valorous deeds might soften his kinsman's heart. "No, by Allah!" was her prompt reply, "they will only make him hate you more." Osama recognised the truth of her words, but continued to go out hunting as before. Then the blow fell. He got news of the presence of another lion in a neighbouring cave, and sallied forth alone to give it battle. He received the wild brute's spring with his sword, and cutting off the monster's head, came to lay it at his mother's feet, telling her the full story of his exploit. She listened to his words, and then bade him leave Cæsarea *at once*—"for, by Allah! you are too bold and too enterprising for your uncle to let you or your brothers stay here." And her words proved true. Next morning Sultan issued an order banishing Murshid's sons from Cæsarea. Against this decree there was no appeal. The house of Murshid had to find a home in other lands.

II.

It was thus that Osama left his native city—practically for ever. Once or twice in later life he paid it a passing visit; but never more, so far as we know, was it his home. Henceforth his was, more or less, the lot of Cain—a wanderer and a vagabond over the face of the earth. Time after time, especially as he grew older, must his thoughts have turned back to the scenes of his childhood and his early manhood; time after time in the days of his exile, whether in Egypt, Damascus, or Hisn-Keifa, must the old memories have revived within him. But never again was Cæsarea his home—never again was he to be permanently settled by the waters of the Orontes. And indeed within twenty years of his banishment the city of his child-

hood ceased to exist. Syria has always been subject, beyond most places in the Mediterranean East, to violent shocks of earthquake; and even in the agony of Israel's death-struggle with Assyria the inspired writer could date his narrative "two years before the earthquake" "in the days of King Uzziah." No earthquake in ancient history was so terrible as that which ruined Antioch in the time of Hadrian; and when our earliest English scientific pilgrim in the reign of Henry I. pushed his adventurous footsteps to the same region, he too saw the great bridge over the river Sihon wrecked by the same agency. Never, however, was there such a series of violent earthquakes as those that marked the middle years of the

twelfth century; and of these earthquakes none wrought a wider ruin than that of 1157. Hardly a single city of the Syrian coast but felt its effects. There was a tragedy everywhere—a tragedy of so fearful a kind that it seems to have almost forced the crusaders and their Saracen enemies into a reluctant peace. But the worst tragedies of all were at Cæsarea and at Hamah hard by Cæsarea. In the former place Osama's cousin, the new prince of Cæsarea, was giving a great banquet in honour of his son's circumcision. Suddenly in the midst of their festivity the feasters felt the earth begin to rock. There was a general rush to the door. Here, however, a favourite horse was tethered, and the frightened animal killed the foremost fugitive with his hoofs. Then, before the rest could clear the corpse away, the building had fallen in. The race of Munkidh became practically extinct, saving for the exiled house of Murshid; and Cæsarea, rebuilt by the munificence of Zangi's son and successor Nur-ed-din, henceforward figured as a mere dependency of the atabek. At Hamah things were worse still; for there, in the old city, once the capital of Hittite princes, and for long years the centre of Syrian resistance to the ambitious schemes of Assyrian monarchs, occurred one of the most pathetic incidents in Eastern history. On the day of the great earthquake all the children of the town were gathered in the school-house. The master left the building for a moment and returned—to find the place fallen in and all his pupils killed! Worse than this, according to the master's own report, this destruction extended to all the other parts of the town; and *not a single parent* "came to ask news about his child." Fathers,

mothers, sons were all overwhelmed in the common catastrophe.

It was in July 1138 that Osama left Cæsarea, practically for the last time. Strange to say, he did not turn his steps to the Court of Zangi, where he had spent the years of his former exile. He may perhaps have foreseen that Zangi would ere long lay hands upon his native town, and though a banished man, he may have felt some scruples at the thought of even indirectly aiding in the abasement of his race. Or it may be, as M. Derenbourg suggests, that Zangi was no longer favourable to his old servant, but regarded Osama's conduct in the previous year as an act of desertion. Anyhow, be the reason what it may, it was not eastwards towards Mosul that the banished emir bent his steps, but southwards towards Damascus. And there, in the city of Eliezer and Benhadad, the city of Abd-al-malik and Walid, he found a warm welcome; and there he lived for six eventful years—*nominally* under the protection of one or other of the princes of Damascus, who in these years succeeded one another in such quick succession, but *really* under the protection of their great Minister Moin-ed-din Anar—the friend and the ally of the Latin kings of Jerusalem, the generous emir whose name figures so prominently in the pages of the greatest of all medieval historians, William of Tyre.

And now we enter on what is, for European readers, the most interesting period of Osama's life—the time when he comes into closest touch with people of our race and our own religion—the Latin crusaders in the Holy Land. The times were changing. Zangi, before he could hurl himself with full force against the Franks, had to gather into one all the petty princes

of Syria and the Orontes valley, Naturally these princelets did not like the process; and above all others it was distasteful to the city of Damascus. But Damascus was not strong enough to resist the atabek by its own strength. Unless it could gain extraneous help it would soon have to go the way of Aleppo, Hamah, and Apamea. But this extraneous help lay close at hand, and was to be had almost for the asking. Much as Damascus dreaded the supremacy of Zangi, Jerusalem and Acre dreaded it more. It was part of the policy of King Fulk,¹ the grandfather of our English Henry II., to set one Mohammedan Power against the other. Thus, and thus only, would his kingdom flourish. To his great joy, Anar was willing to pay a large price for an alliance Fulk would have been glad to make without any such bribe. The Franks had long fretted over the loss of Cæsarea Philippi—a city they had once held, but which had been taken from them, only a few years previously, by an unorthodox body of Mohammedans, the Ismailites or Assassins. The united forces from Acre and Damascus, from Tripoli and Antioch, took part in this siege, at which Osama must have been present, and marvelled at the enormous siege-castle built by the Franks to coerce the doomed city—a castle so high that, in the quaint words of a contemporary, the folk of Cæsarea seemed to be fighting “with angels” rather than with men. The town was taken and handed over to the Franks about June 1140 A.D.

It was during these years that Osama's special gifts were called into their fullest activity. He was the ambassador selected to conduct negotiations with the

Franks, and time after time, either alone or in company with the vizier of Damascus, Anar, did he visit all the great cities of the Latin kingdom. He was on the best of terms with the Templars, and under their protection entered the great mosque on Mount Moriah, from which, directly or indirectly, that great Order drew its name.

“When I was in Jerusalem,” he writes, “I entered the Mosque of El Aksa [i.e., the headquarters of the Templars in Jerusalem], and they assigned me a little church hard by in which to make my prayers. One day, as I was praying (with my face turned south towards Mecca), a Frank pounced down upon me and forced my head towards the east, saying, ‘That is the proper way to say your prayers.’ Then a body of my friends the Templars flung themselves upon my assailant and bundled him out of the church, while I for my part went on with my prayers. Once more, however, my old assailant, escaping from his correctors, pounced down upon me, turning my head to the east again, saying, ‘This is the proper way to pray.’”

Once more the Templars had to drive him out; after which they made apologies for his conduct on the plea that he was a stranger newly arrived from the West, where he had never seen any one at prayer whose face was not turned to the east.

No incident could more clearly mark the extent to which a lengthened sojourn in the Holy Land modified the prejudices of the European knights. The Templars, indeed, were Osama's very good “friends.” It was under their protection that he paid his visit to the “Church of the Chain,” of which he tells so singular a legend; and it was on their hill of Mount Moriah that he heard members of

¹ King of Jerusalem from 1131-1143 A.D.

this Order ask his patron, the vizier Anar, if he would like to see their "Child-God." "Truly should I," said the courteous vizier, and a Templar was straightway told off to guide the visitor towards the statue of the Virgin-Mother, where she sat with the "Child-Messiah—blessings on Him—in her lap."

Nothing struck Osama in his journeys through the Christian kingdom more than the comparative freedom of the women-folk among the Franks. This, fresh from the seclusion of an oriental harem, he could not understand. "The Franks," he writes, "do not seem to understand the meaning of the words jealousy or honour. If one of them goes a-walking with his wife and meets another man, this last will seize the woman's hand and draw her aside for a private talk, while the husband stands some way off till the interview is over; or, if it be very long, the husband will go off elsewhere, leaving his wife." At Nablus, if Osama can be trusted, he was witness of a still more singular instance of Frankish debauchery. But unluckily this story, though intensely amusing from its *naïveté*, is hardly fit for publication, unless, in Gibbon's words, "it is veiled in the obscurity of a learned language." At Tyre, Osama was shocked to see the women-folk using the public baths along with the men; and, horror of horrors, a young girl actually entered the baths while Osama was engaged in his ablutions! Osama, scarcely able to believe his eyes, called out to his comrade to go and see if it really was a girl. The girl's father, who was accompanying his daughter, heard the question, and turning to the astonished emir, said, "Yes, it is my daughter, and as she has no mother, I take charge of the wash-

ing of her head. It is for this reason that I bring her to the baths with me." Osama could only answer that the father did well in undertaking such a pious task.

Osama seems to have made more than one tour through the Latin kingdom — marvelling at all he saw. He visited Nablus, Tyre, Acre, and Jerusalem. At Haifa a cunning Frank tried to pass off upon him a tame panther under the pretence that it was an Eastern cat. But he was too knowing a huntsman to be taken in by such a trick. At Tiberias he was witness of a curious scene, such as might have been seen at many an English merry-making fifty years ago. It was a Christian fair or feast, and the French knights came galloping out of their city to see a race between two decrepit old women. These they set at one end of a level course, while on a rock at the other end they set up a pig. Then they made the two crones run a race for this prize, which was to belong to her who reached it first. Each of the two competitors was surrounded by her own backers or opponents, and loud bursts of laughter greeted every stumble that they made. On another occasion at Nablus the viscount invited him to see a trial by combat — that curious institution so rife in the middle ages, and of such frequent occurrence in the Assizes of Jerusalem. Some Saracen brigands had swooped down upon a lordship near Nablus, and popular suspicion pointed to an old peasant as their guide. This peasant, when accused before King Fulk, offered to prove his innocence by wager of battle. The challenge was accepted; but, if we may trust Osama (who perhaps, however, was mistaken in this point), the accuser's lord refused

to let the accuser fight in person for fear of losing a valuable servant. Accordingly a blacksmith was chosen in his stead. "This blacksmith," says Osama, "I saw. *He was a young man — always, whether sitting still or standing up, calling out for a drink.*" As for the suspected traitor, he was a courageous old man, who kept on "cracking his fingers" as a sign of defiance to his foe. Each combatant had a lance and shield. The old man had the best of it, till at last his strength began to fail. Then the viscount, tiring of so bloodless a sport, called out to them to fight harder. The blacksmith, mustering all his strength, smote his aged antagonist to the ground — as though with a hammer. Then, leaping on the prostrate man, he strove to plunge his fingers into his eyes. But the blood, streaming down his own face, obscured his vision, and he was forced at last to beat his victim's head in with the staff of his lance. Then the corpse of the poor old villager was hung up upon a gibbet; while the blacksmith, after receiving a large reward in land, rode off to his own place. "Such," says Osama, "is the jurisprudence, and such are the judicial methods, of the Franks."

Before the treaty between Jerusalem and Damascus was signed, Osama was commissioned to negotiate an exchange of prisoners. As the Franks had by far the greater number of captives, it became necessary to give money for the release of many Saracens. One by one the slaves were led into his presence, and, says Osama, "I was on the point of purchasing their freedom" when there came upon the scene a "very Satan among the Franks," William Jiba by name. He had just swooped down upon a convoy of pilgrims from Africa — making some four

hundred captives. Osama bought the freedom of as many as he could; the rest would have to wait their turn. One day, however, he noticed among the prisoners a young man who, after saluting him, sat down without speaking a word. Osama, pitying this unfortunate, asked who he was, and finding that he belonged to a tanner, inquired how much the owner would take for his release. "I will not sell the young man by himself," was the hard-hearted reply; "he must go with this old man, — forty-three gold pieces for the pair." And Osama paid down the money on the spot out of his private purse, trusting that his patron Anar would repay him. Getting back to Damascus, he told the vizier how his funds had run short, and he had been obliged to give security for the remainder of the debt. "I had not money enough with me. But now that I am back again, you may pay the ransom if you will: *if not, I will pay it myself.*" "Not so," said his noble-hearted patron; "by Allah, it is I who will be their redeemer. But I will have the captives I free for my own service." Anar evidently intended to make them repay the money they cost him — perhaps with some interest added; and this explains Osama's naïf remark: "No one was keener than Anar to confer a kindness; but no one, I may add, was keener to make a profit on the transaction." On another occasion that "Satan of the Franks," William Jiba, offered Osama thirty-eight captives for sale — among them being the wife of a prisoner whose freedom had already been purchased. Osama, in the kindness of his heart, wished to buy the wife also and restore her to her husband. "On my faith," said the greedy Frank, "you must

have all or none." Osama's funds had again run short; and as he could not shake the Christian ruffian's resolution, he left the house. "But Allah—glory be to Him!—decreed that all these captives should make their escape that very night." The country-folk round there were mostly Mohammedans, and wherever a fugitive came they gave him hiding till he could get away to the land of Islam. Next morning William Jiba coolly asked Osama for the ransom-money of the woman he had wished to purchase. Osama naturally said, "Deliver her into my hands and I will pay the sum." This of course the Frankish "Satan" could not do; but he insisted on payment, and Osama, being in a strange land, had to acquiesce in the demand. But, adds the kindly hearted emir, "to this I resigned myself easily—so glad was I at the unfortunate folks' escape."

Many and many a time must Osama have seen the great King of Jerusalem—Fulk of Anjou—who, after a life of successful policy at home, had some ten years earlier started for the East to marry the heiress of the newly founded kingdom. Fulk was a just-dealing prince, and showed himself very friendly to the exiled emir. He knew how to punish his own followers if they broke faith with their Saracen allies. Once, so Osama tells us, the Franks, newly settled at Cæsarea Philippi, swooped down upon the Musulman flocks that were browsing in the woods hard by. "Now at that time there was peace between us and the Franks, and I was dwelling at Damascus. I said to Fulk, the son of Fulk, 'The lord [of Cæsarea Philippi] has done us a wrong—he has robbed us of our flocks.'" Then the king bade six or seven of

his knights sit in judgment on the case. They left the hall, like a modern jury, till they were agreed, and then returning to the royal presence, declared their fellow-countryman bound to pay damages to those whom he had robbed. They fixed a recompense; the king ordered its payment, and Osama finally left the court with four hundred gold pieces in his purse. It was on this occasion that Fulk expressed his surprise on hearing that Osama was a knight; and received from the high-born emir an assurance that he really was a "knight after the manner of his race and family." On another occasion Fulk saw Osama and his patron Anar gazing with intense admiration on a splendid falcon—"with thirteen feathers to its tail"—that a Genoese had just been preening for his sport. Fulk at once presented them with the bird they longed for.

Closer still, however, were Osama's relations with the Templars, and closer still his friendship with a nameless Christian knight. "He made my acquaintance," says Osama, "and grew so friendly that he used to call me his '*brother*.' We loved each other [dearly], and were constantly together." At last the Christian knight had to return home to Europe; and before quitting Syria, as a final pledge of his affection, offered to take with him Osama's eldest son Murhaf—a boy of fourteen—that he might be trained up in all the graces of Christian chivalry. Osama did not relish the proposal; but his courteous nature could not give a gruff refusal. He pretended that he had intended to ask his friend to do him this very favour had it not been for the love his (Osama's) own mother bore towards her grandson: "She would not

let him come to Syria with me till I had pledged my word to bring him back safely." "What!" cried the knight in astonishment; "is your mother still alive?" "'Yes,' was my answer." "Then do not vex her," said his European friend, relinquishing his own plan without a murmur. It is hard to say whether this story reflects more credit on the Saracen or the Christian.

Few things struck Osama more than the ignorance of the Franks in matters of medicine and surgery. This is what we should have expected. For in the eleventh, the twelfth, and even in the thirteenth century, Europe was content in such matters to be the humble disciple of the East. A devoted band of scholars—Constantine of Monte Cassino, Plato of Tivoli, John of Pisa, Gerard of Cremona, and Michael Scot himself—all occupied themselves with translating the works of Arabian or of Greek physicians into Latin. Nay, more than this, when the heir of France, afterwards Louis VI., poisoned by his wicked step-mother, Fulk of Anjou's mother, lay at death's door, he owed his recovery not to the skill of a European doctor, but to that of a certain "bearded doctor from Barbary." Some of Osama's instances of Latin incapacity in surgical or medical matters are so amusing as to deserve quotation.

Osama's uncle, Sultan, at the request of a Frank noble, sent a noted doctor from Cæsarea to attend to two urgent cases. This doctor, Thabit, went; but, to every one's surprise, he returned home in a few days. His patients had been a knight suffering from an abscess on the thigh and a woman far gone in consumption. For the one case Thabit ordered a plaster and careful diet; for the other an

almost equally simple diet. Both patients were doing well, when an ignorant Frank doctor appeared upon the scene. "*This* man," he said, pointing to Thabit, "cannot cure the invalids." Then, turning to the sick knight, he asked him if he would rather live with one leg or die with two. Naturally enough the frightened patient chose the former alternative. Upon this the new and self-constituted physician called for the presence of a "sturdy knight with a sharp axe." Knight and axe soon made their appearance—Thabit looking on in speechless astonishment at this mad scene. The poor man's leg was laid upon a wooden block and the last-entered knight was ordered to cut off the limb, if possible, at one stroke. One blow was struck, but only made a ghastly wound. A second blow followed, with hardly any greater success; for the marrow began to pour out from the broken bone, and the wounded man expired. Having thus murdered the knight, our Frank physician proceeded to murder the lady, whose disease he pronounced to be the somewhat strange one of "a devil in the head." This devil he sought to exorcise by clipping off his victim's hair and cutting a cross in her skull. On the wound thus formed, to make matters pleasanter for his patient, he promptly proceeded to rub in salt. It is hardly necessary to add that the woman also very soon succumbed to this heroic treatment; nor need we wonder that Thabit went back to Cæsarea after "learning more about Frankish medicine than he had ever known before."

One day, as Osama was riding from Acre to Tiberias in company with one of the greatest princes of the land, William de Bures, lord of Galilee, and ex-governor of the

kingdom during the troubled days of King Baldwin II's captivity, he heard this noble tell a still more singular story. "In our native land," said William, "there was a very powerful knight who fell so ill that he was at death's door. As a last resource we handed the case over to a certain Christian priest of great authority, telling him to ride along with us and make an examination of the sick man, our notion being that he would only have to lay his hands upon the patient to effect a cure." When, however, the priest got to the bedside he called for wax, and rolling up some of it between his fingers, calmly plugged the nostrils of the ailing knight, who naturally died upon the spot. "We," continued William de Bures, "said to the priest, 'Well, he's dead now.' 'Yes,' was the answer; 'I saw he was in great pain, so I stuffed up his nostrils that he might die and be at rest!'"

It is only fair to add that Osama, with characteristic fairness, while condemning Frankish surgery as a whole, admits that some of the Frankish doctors wrought remarkable cures.

And so we may picture Osama to ourselves during six full years, passing to and fro almost at will between Damascus and Acre, or travelling up and down the little kingdom from Tyre to Jerusalem or from Haifa to Tiberias, a welcome guest with king and noble, and holding familiar intercourse with the heroes of that wonderful realm which Frankish valour had built up on the confines of two decaying caliphates. Such friendly communication between Saracen and Frank is an unexpected confirmation of hints that are given by contemporary Christian writers. Amalric I.'s great Constable, Henry of Toron, was the friend of

Saladin, who is said to have received knighthood at his hands; a thirteenth-century monk has told us that one of Saladin's own sons spent a season in Jerusalem for the purpose of learning the French language; while a thirteenth-century *legend* does not hesitate to make Saladin himself accept medical attendance from the hospital at Acre. But even legend itself could hardly have invented a more striking instance of this singular friendship between men of rival creeds and alien speech than that of Osama's affection for the Frankish knight "his brother," who offered to take Osama's eldest son to Europe for an education in the perfect chivalry of the West.

It was not, however, merely as an ambassador to the Franks that Osama served his patron at Damascus. It was his diplomacy that prevented the formation of a dangerous coalition between Zangi and the ex-vizier of Egypt. This seems to have made him hated by the atabek, who in 1144 succeeded by intrigue in forcing Anar to drive his guest from his gates. Anar, says Osama, did this very unwillingly; "he wished me well, and was very grieved to let me go. But, being powerless to protect me more, he sent his secretary with a message in his name: 'By Allah, if I could command the services of half my subjects, I would put myself at their head and beat the other half; or if I could command only one-third of them, I would not give you up.'" As it was, he had to bow his head, though Osama never doubted the truth of his patron's words: "Wherever you may be, you will always retain my friendship." Never did Osama lose his gratitude for his generous friend. From Egypt—his second house of

exile—he sent a long poem full of affection and regard. He calls upon the voyagers to take his greeting to his friend:—

“O traveller, that art crossing the desert with thy white camels, carry an exile’s message to the Emir Anar; tell him that he is the best of all the Turks; that there is none like him for justice, piety, and generosity. Tell him that Tuman [Zangi’s agent in Damascus] is not more worthy of confidence than Osama. And even supposing that I have committed faults unpardonable, ask him what has been the offence of my wives and children.”

Osama protests that he does not regret his exile if it affords any satisfaction or ease to his patron:—

“I can bear any pain that gives thee pleasure. Nor am I [altogether] grieved at having to leave a land where people cannot tell a falcon from a vulture. . . . Peace be with thee! For, so long as thou art living, I shall have all I ask for, and every other misfortune will seem a blessing.”

Despite these bold words it must have been with a very heavy heart that Osama led his long caravan of camels, with his mother, brothers, children, and servants, from that earthly Paradise, Damascus—on whose beauty the great prophet of his race had refused to gaze lest he should forget the future joys of heaven—past Ascalon, and across the desert to Cairo.

The aged calif gave him a kindly welcome, but refused him all political employment. He was assigned a fitting revenue with a competent estate, and that was all. Once more he turned himself to letters. He gathered the great poets of his day around him, and made his young son Murhaf learn their verses. He collected a vast library of four thousand books, and devoted himself to study.

But such pursuits, while they might be the amusements, could not be the business, of his life. Though he was now almost fifty, and his hair was turning white, his fund of superfluous energy was undiminished, and could not be worked off in these ways. Day after day the exile would ride out into the country round Cairo, watching the calif’s huntsmen at their craft, and thinking sadly of the gay cavalcade of his father, uncles, cousins, and friends, that used to issue from the white walls of Cæsarea for falconry and the chase. At last the stranger’s wistful glances waked the sympathy of the grand huntsman, who told his master how his newly arrived guest used to follow every movement of the sport as though wishing to take a part in it. “Let him make one of our party for the future,” said the good-natured old calif; “it may be some solace for his exile.” Once given this permission, Osama’s perfect skill in this pastime soon forced the grand huntsman himself to admit that the Syrian emir’s knowledge of woodcraft was not inferior to his own, and to wind up some words of praise in the calif’s own presence with the asseveration that Osama’s advice in these matters was as good as a professional’s.

Al Hafidh the Fatimite calif of Egypt died some four years after Osama reached Cairo; and shortly after this event, which happened in October or November 1149, Osama was once more able to enter upon the greater game of politics and intrigues. No one played a more prominent part in the rise and fall of Egyptian califs or viziers with which the next few years are crowded. He was employed on more than one embassy to Bozrah or Damascus, where he made or renewed

his intimacy with Shirkuh—the future conqueror of Egypt and Saladin's famous uncle. The object of this embassy was to induce Zangi's son and successor Nur-ed-din to form an alliance with the Egyptians against the Franks. After this Osama spent several months in defending Ascalon against the same nation. Later still, with more questionable zeal, he prompted the ill-fated Nasr to murder his friend and master the new calif; while at the same time he sanctioned, if he did not incite, the same prince to murder his own grandfather, the great vizier Ibn As Sallar. After this Egypt was too hot to hold him, and, despite the pressing invitations of the new vizier, the accomplished As Salih, he once more found himself a fugitive in Damascus.

Damascus was now no longer an independent principality. Only a few months previously its impotent prince had resigned it into the hands of the great Mohammedan atabek, Nur-ed-din, the son and greater successor of his father Zangi. Shirkuh, who was now (1154 A.D.) lieutenant in Damascus, welcomed his old friend kindly; Nur-ed-din gave him fresh estates, and Osama was soon persuaded to refuse the pressing invitations sent him to return to Cairo. It was to no purpose that As Salih, the new vizier of Cairo, lavished every attention on the wives and children that Osama had left behind him in Egypt. It was in vain that he sent letter after letter, or poem after poem, to his fellow-poet. Osama was persistent in his resolution; and at last Osama's family took ship at Damietta, hoping that a favourable wind would bear them safe to Acre. The new

King of Jerusalem, Baldwin III., the son of Osama's old friend Fulk of Anjou, gave the travellers a safe-conduct, which would have carried them safely from Acre to Damascus had not a sudden storm wrecked the vessel off the Syrian coast. The cruel laws or customs of the twelfth century treated shipwrecked travellers as though they were criminals. When the men of Acre heard of the misfortune, they hurried out to sea with axes to complete the ruin that the elements had begun. Even Baldwin himself rode down to the shore to superintend the work of robbery. One of Osama's servants swam ashore and confronted the perjured king with his own safe-conduct. But Baldwin refused to interfere. Musulmans, he said, did the same to shipwrecked Frankish vessels, and he would not bar the townsmen of Acre from their rights. "But you will not make us prisoners?" queried the faithful servant. "No," was the king's answer, as he gave orders to gather the whole *cortège* under one roof,—which done, he proceeded to rob the women-folk of all their jewels and their clothes. Then, returning five hundred pieces of gold to the unfortunate troop, he bade its members get back to their own land—Damascus—as best they could with this money. The whole party numbered at least fifty, and the value of the spoil amounted to 30,000 dinars. At this moment Osama was with Nur-ed-din engaged in an expedition against the Sultan of Iconium. His reception of the news is characteristic of the man. The loss of so much wealth, he tells us, hardly troubled him at all, now that his children and his kinsfolk were restored. But one loss he did feel—the loss of his splendid library

of 4000 books. "Their loss," to quote his own words many years later, "has left a void which nothing can fill."

We must hurry over the ten years of Osama's life at the Court of Nur-ed-din. We must pass over the long series of poems interchanged between him and his fellow-poet the vizier of Egypt—who used his exiled friend as a kind of ambassador at Damascus to urge the great atabek to assist him in a united onset on the Franks. Osama did his best, but he failed. It was consequently all in vain that As Salih flung expedition after expedition into Southern Syria; it was all in vain, to use his own expression, that the "horses of Egypt" bore their cuirassed riders against the Franks; all in vain that the chivalry of Cairo flashed down upon Judea with their shining casques and blades of cutting Indian steel. Nur-ed-din would not stir in concert. He was ill, or indisposed to make alliance with the heretic Fatimites of the Nile; he preferred to go hunting in the environs of Hamah, and Osama could not resist the temptation of sharing in this ill-timed sport. Be the reason what it may, the great chance was allowed to slip away; and the kingdom of Jerusalem was saved.

At last, after ten years of this life at Damascus, Osama left Nur-ed-din's Court in 1164 for that of another Saracen prince, the lord of Hisn-Keifa on the Tigris. Ten years later (May 1174) Nur-ed-din died—to be succeeded nominally by his little son of eleven, but practically by the most famous Mohammedan prince that the world has seen—that Saladin to whom the greatest Christian poet of the middle ages has assigned a special place among the noblest of the dead

in Hades; that Saladin whom the same poet chooses as the very type of heathen generosity and chivalry—a prince worthy to be ranked with Alexander himself.

Osama was now an old man of eighty. He was forced to recognise that the days of his prime were over. "Weak from age," he moans, "I am powerless to serve sultans, and only beg to be relieved of my duties." To quote his own pathetic words, the new generation wanted him no longer: "I, the aged sheikh, am become a worthless piece of merchandise." "Time has whitened my skin with its eighty years; my foot grows weak, and my hand trembles. When I write, it trembles like the sword-point in the grasp of a frightened man. *Strange that a hand which now can hardly wield a reed should once have broken lances in the breasts of lions.*" He shut himself up in his own house, and found a bitter pleasure in the thought that it was only strangers and not his own kinsfolk who watched his waning strength. His old friends were dead or dying: "They have breathed their last breath, and their departure has been [in a sense] my death. I ought to shed tears for myself, not for those whom I survive like a man—struck motionless in a limitless desert." He once more turned to literature for relief. He commenced his autobiography; he wrote other books; he exchanged letters and treatises with learned friends, such as Imad-ed-din, and Al-Fadil, the councillor of Saladin; he collected his poems into two volumes. Then in the midst of this sedentary activity there came the news of Saladin's successes: Egypt had long been his, and he was preparing to seize upon Damascus and the cities of

the Orontes valley. Osama's eldest son Murhaf had for some time been one of Saladin's dearest friends, and was in attendance on the great emir at Cairo. He presented his father's poems, honeyed with flattery as they were, before his powerful master. Saladin read them, and declared that they surpassed every former production of their kind. At last a courier came to Hisn-Keifa inviting the old man to Damascus; and Murhaf sent his father an ebony staff on which to stay his tottering body as he journeyed west. Osama's joy knew no bounds. At last he saw a quiet haven before him for the few last years of his life, after all the stormy weather of his past. He broke out into song, and thanked Allah for giving him such a friend in his declining days. He invoked all happiness on the head of his benefactor, and prayed God to extend his power to the very limits of the world. No blessing could be too great for the prince whose kindness had reached to the old man, "friendless and fortuneless in a lost corner of the earth." Saladin the conquerer, Saladin the king, had conquered for Osama as well as for himself. "I am Saladin's guest," sang the octogenarian poet, "and the hand of danger cannot reach me."

Osama reached Damascus towards the beginning of October 1174. The great sultan welcomed him kindly. He delighted to talk to the old man, whose memory, as if he were the survivor from a perished world, stretched back almost to the days of Malik Shah—to days when no Frank conqueror had set foot in Syria. He loved, too, to discuss points of literature with a man of letters; to hear a poet read the poems he composed in his patron's honour. Time after

time he would call Osama and Murhaf to his presence and discuss all subjects with his two friends, from politics to questions of taste and history. Even when called out on military expeditions, he did not forget the old man left idly fretting in Damascus, but sent him constant news of his campaign. And doubtless from Osama's lips he heard many a story of the days when the century was young, and many a tale of the earlier champions of Islam, from Toghtakin the treacherous and Balak the victorious to Borsak of Hamadan and the restorer of the faith, Zengui of Mosul.

In Saladin's absence Osama flung himself once more into study with a will. He became a public teacher; he wrote new books; he made fresh copies of old ones. The stiffening fingers, that were now "powerless to wield the Indian sabre," could still by fits and starts control the writer's pen. He re-edited the poems of his earlier years, and put the finishing touches to his autobiography. And then from time to time his loneliness was cheered by visits from his fellow-scholars—amongst them Saladin's two secretaries, Al Fadil and Imad-ed-din—the latter of whom had heard Osama's poetry recited a thousand miles away at Ispahan. Saladin, on his return, showered fresh gifts upon his *protégé*; and in the summer of 1175 seems to have given him estates in the neighbourhood of his native city of Caesarea. Once more the group of friends used to gather of an evening at Saladin's house, and there, as the great prince sat playing at chess, would study the old problems or read fresh verses. And yet, for all this St Martin's summer of happiness, Osama was not truly at his ease.

When his friends left Damascus, Osama's verses followed them from place to place, filled with sad complaints of his loneliness and his yearning for their presence. While his patron is far away conquering rival princes, "like a second Alexander," Osama's morning of sunshine turns to "stormy night." He is alone and friendless in the great city, where folk regard him as a survival from a "perished world." No other words could so well describe the feelings of the old warrior stranded in the weakness of extreme age in an alien place—far from the memories of his early youth.

And then came a trouble worse than all else. Kind as Saladin had shown himself towards the octogenarian emir, there seems before long to have crept a coldness between them. Even Murhaf appears to have lost part of his influence with his master; and Osama was in a worse plight still. The cause of this dissension is uncertain. M. Derenbourg thinks it may have arisen from suspicions as to Osama's orthodoxy—for one of Osama's own friends declares that Osama was a Shiite. At such an accusation the orthodoxy of the great sultan might well take alarm; and the suspicion would be strengthened by the recollection that the same heresy had flourished in Cæsarea during Osama's boyhood, and that Osama himself had spent ten years at the Fatimite calif's Court in Cairo. Anyhow, be the cause what it may, Osama lost Saladin's favour, and, so far as we can see, never regained it. His closing years are one long complaint. His thoughts wandered back to the days of his early manhood. In memory he refought the battles of his prime, and, remembering how the "flame of war"

had burned round him from his fifteenth year, marvelled that he had lived to see his ninetieth. "Ah!" was his plaintive cry—"Ah! that it had pleased Allah to have let me be slain before I lost the use of my limbs." For, after all, a hero's death was the death to be desired above every other. In one pathetic poem Osama enumerates all the battles he had fought in since the days when the Ismailians attacked Cæsarea in 1113-14, and moans over the altered state of things. The cry of Evander is upon his lips, "O mihi præteritos referat si Jupiter annos!"—only with a keener bitterness than lurks in Virgil's immortal line; for Osama has no *young Pallas* to solace his declining years, and the infirmities of age were beating down his life as with a second Tithonus.

"When I rise [from my couch] it is like lifting up a mountain; and I walk as though dragged down with chains. I crawl along grasping a staff in that hand which in old days used to wield the yellow lance and sword of Indian steel. My soft couch is as a bed of rock. Man is utterly overthrown here in this earth. At the moment when he reaches his full perfection he returns to the feebleness of infancy."

Osama realised to the full the words of our own poet:—

"The years that made the stripling
wise
Undo their work again,
And leave him, blind of heart and eyes,
The last and least of men;
For man has overlived his day,
And, darkening in the light,
Scarce feels the senses break away
To mix with ancient Night."

And so the years dragged on, Osama doubtless growing feebler and feebler. Not all the brilliance

of Saladin's successes could restore the old man's strength, though he lived to hear of the great victory of Hattin, and the crowning joy of Saladin's career—the conquest of Jerusalem in October 1187. Osama's individual life had overlapped the existence of a kingdom. When he was born the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem did not exist, nor had a single crusader set his foot in Syria; when he died that kingdom had passed away. He had seen eight or nine Latin kings reigning in the Holy City; he survived them all except the last. The contemporary of Baldwin I. and Tancred was now the contemporary of Richard Cœur-de-Lion and Philip Augustus. He who, as young man, had seen the son of Boamund strike a gallant Kurd to earth, must almost certainly have seen Guy of

Lusignan during the days of his captivity in Damascus. Then at length the end came. He addressed one last despairing poem to Saladin, to congratulate that sultan on his great victory of Hattin. But it was of no avail: though he protested that his ninety-six years had only increased his love for the head of his race, he could not get even a final interview. Saladin could not, or would not, break off in the full career of his triumph to listen to an old man's prayer. And so, one year later, 16th November 1188, Osama died in Damascus. He was buried near the city, and there in the course of the next century, at the foot of the Holy Mountain, Ibn Khallican saw his tomb, and entering in, offered up a few last words of prayer for the soul of the old warrior now taken to his rest.

ENGLAND, FRANCE, AND SIAM.

Now that England and France have concluded a treaty to remove any causes of future misunderstanding regarding their respective interests in Siam, it is well that the English people should realise the facts concerning the Siamese question, and the importance of the step that has just been taken.

Of late years some light has for the first time been shed upon Siamese methods of administration and Siamese shams. To the general reader the subject may seem to be one of very slight concern, but to the statesman, to those interested in British trade with Siam (and that means practically all the foreign trade of that country), and to those whose memories are retentive enough to carry them back to July 1893, when there was imminent danger of war with France on account of the action of the Republic at Bangkok, the question is serious enough.

For years France has been extending her authority in the Far East. Cochin China was secured by France in 1859, and within the last twelve years she has added to it Annam, Tongking, and Cambodia. These conquests carried the French boundaries on the west up to the confines of Siam, and while the exact line of demarcation was not defined, the claims of France and Siam overlapped, and that fertile source of difference, the rights of intervening States which had passed under the suzerainty of the two principals, offered great opportunities for quarrel. In the years which followed the establishment of French authority over Annam, Tongking, and Cambodia it may be safely stated that

the Siamese gave great provocation, and the French exercised great restraint: it is equally certain that had the Siamese Government at any time in these years shown a real desire to come to a friendly settlement with the Government of the Republic, a dividing line would have been fixed between the French and the Siamese spheres of authority, and that boundary would have been far east of the Mekong river. A Government of such hopeless ineptitude and stupidity as that responsible for the affairs of Siam could not be expected to seize the points of a situation which then depended for safe and easy treatment on its own action.

Whilst France, by rapidly pushing her authority over enormous tracts of country, had become the neighbour of Siam in the east, the extension of British protection in the Malay Peninsula was far more slowly reducing the distance between Siamese and British spheres of influence in the south. The approach of the two great Powers made it evident to the King of Siam and his nobles that the days of the Kingdom of the White Elephant as an independent State were numbered. The means employed to stave off the evil day and put the Siamese Ministers in what they thought would be the best position to make satisfactory terms with the Western Powers are those which, if natural to an Eastern people, would probably not have been pushed to ruin by any body of pretended statesmen less fatuous than the clique of Bangkok notables whose European veneer has qualified them to hoodwink the inquiring globe-trotter, but has not

fitted them to guard the destinies of Siam or improve the condition of its wretched people.

For some years after the advance of France into Annam, Tongking, and Cambodia, the hands of the Republic were full enough with the effort to secure her foothold in these countries, to settle her differences with China, and to consider the cost of acquiring these doubtful luxuries. Her claims to territory on behalf of Cambodia were from time to time put forward, and from time to time they were met by what the Foreign Minister in Bangkok no doubt felt to be exhibitions of masterly diplomacy. The object of this article is to make the situation plain, and for that purpose plain language is the best. Eastern diplomacy is the same throughout the East, be it China, Siam, India, or Malaya; there is no real difference in the idea, though the methods of treatment may vary. When any unpleasant question is raised, the single intention is to give no direct answer, and on no account to help forward a settlement which would involve anything like mutual concessions. The idea is that questions come from individuals, and individuals die or are removed from the position of being able to press them to categorical answer. Therefore the Eastern diplomatist temporises; and while he meets claim with claim (if such a course be possible), he will at any rate neglect no device to put off by every means in his power the settlement of points at issue, the preparation of an instrument detailing terms of agreement, and the final execution of that instrument by signature and seal. To obtain this end, all forms of duplicity and misrepresentation are brought into play; and it wants no great effort of imagination to

see how effectively this simple process may be used in determining a large question of boundary, especially when the weaker party believes that the stronger will never use, or be allowed to use, violent methods to compel a settlement.

This was exactly the Siamese position in regard to French claims; and the question at issue, according to ordinary calculation, might have remained *in statu quo* for another ten, twenty, or thirty years but for the introduction of two new elements into the quarrel.

The Siamese, with the common astuteness of all Easterns, were making the best use of the unpleasant position in which they were placed, as between the devil and the deep sea, by playing the French and British Powers off against each other. Thus every French request was met by the reply that it would be impossible to grant it without making most embarrassing difficulties with Britain, and the smallest British demand was of course met by a similar reply. This served well enough, and was a useful change to the eternal pleas put forward with the single intention of securing delay until a change of Government in Paris or London, of Governor-General in Cochin China or Singapore, of British or French Minister-Resident in Bangkok—any or all of which might be hoped to mean at least a respite, and perhaps the casting of the whole unpleasant business into the well-stocked limbo of diplomatic failures. Unfortunately for the would-be statesmen in Bangkok, their trips to Europe and temporary residences in English universities had given them ideas that would not have occurred to their forefathers, and this Western experience suggested that not only

could they fend off the settlement of disputed boundary questions, but, by a judicious manipulation of British and French Cabinets and British and French popular prejudices, they might even extend their own boundaries on both east and south, and so not only gain great prestige with their own subject peoples and those who owned allegiance to their French and British neighbours, but, when the day of retribution should at last come, that they would have more sops to cast to Cerberus. An Eastern of the governing classes will tell you that before all things he is a diplomatist, and that the Western is as wax in his hands. For this faith he has some excuse; and how delightful to think that when two great Powers are quarrelling over the rectification of their boundaries with an Eastern kingdom, and that kingdom is in danger of dismemberment, it should be able to secure a settlement with those insistent foreigners by giving them lands which have been quietly and unostentatiously filched from the one or the other!

That was the Siamese programme, containing an element new to Eastern diplomacy; and the reason why it did not succeed was because of the sudden introduction of that other element, on which those responsible for affairs in Bangkok had never counted.

The programme did well enough for a time; and the Siamese pushed their influence slowly but steadily to the eastwards into Cambodia, and southwards down the Malay Peninsula, trusting always that no active measures would ever be taken by France or England to stop them; prepared to absorb any quantity of territory, to "eat"

for "govern") any number of new provinces; and prepared, if need be, to retire under protest on that probably remote day when France or England should decline any longer to be imposed upon. Quite contrary to all information received from the agents of Siam in Europe, the French suddenly lost patience, and, careless of result, scared no longer by the old bogies that had served so well, not only put their foot down, but planted it heavily on several Siamese outposts; drove the occupants across the Mekong; and, at the same time, forced the passage of the Menam and threatened the capital of Siam, which lay at the mercy of two French gunboats for a space of hours.

These operations resulted in France forcing on Siam the very remarkable treaty which may now be read by every one; and whilst French troops are still quartered on Siamese territory, there are publicists in France who have abused their Government for not staying in Bangkok and taking advantage of the plucky action of their gunboats to control the destinies of Siam for the rest of time, and round off their Eastern possessions by the simple addition to Cochin China of the kingdom of Siam and all its dependencies.

No doubt the very remarkable outburst of popular feeling in England when the doings of the French at Bangkok became known is the reason why Siam can still lay claim to independence; but though it happens to be our interest to see that a country in which our trade is about tenfold that of all the other nations together should not pass under the dominion of France, it is also time that the public and the Government of England should begin to learn the truth about Siam. The public of

England is evidently possessed of instincts that are a good deal more valuable and see further than those of the Foreign Office; for any one who watched the course of events in Siam during the latter half of 1893, and who has read the published correspondence since, will believe that the Foreign Office was driven to the feeble action which it could not avoid by the clamour of those who realised the situation, and declined to see Siam pass for ever under the control of France. How near the danger, how manifold the interests, how enormous might have been the loss, and how momentous the issues which hung in the balance for a few brief days, need not here be insisted upon. The British public was in earnest—very much in earnest; but the danger once past, there were a thousand other things to think of, and the incident is probably forgotten. The same public whose voice was raised only just in time to protect its interests (though not to altogether safeguard them) would, however, expect its statesmen not to allow the Siamese difficulty to assume such an acutely unpleasant form again. Lord Salisbury and his colleagues, with all the weight of their majority, have done well to take up this question, and it may be hoped that they have by the treaty of 15th January last so settled it that its ghost will not return to frighten into all sorts of undignified exclamations and attitudes the members of another and a weaker Cabinet.

Up to last month the result of what had occurred was this. Siam had lost a large extent of valuable territory and a deal of prestige, but she deserved no sympathy whatever. France had gained not only in proportion to Siam's loss, but she had added immensely to

her prestige by forcing her vessels of war up to Bangkok, by imposing her own terms on Siam, by placing a French garrison in Siamese territory, and, perhaps more than all, by offering to register at her Consulate in Bangkok as a French subject every Siamese who chose for any reason to claim French protection.

The extent of our interests in Siam, as compared with those of any other nation, has been stated, but the success of the French has of course been a direct blow to us, and whilst our own boundary questions remain exactly as they were, and our influence in Bangkok, whatever it was worth, has suffered severely, the Siamese still pursue in the south their policy of extension to the direct detriment of British interests. Siamese methods of government are, to a country that comes under them, like an inroad of locusts followed by a moral and physical blight from which the suffering people and the suffering fields can never recover so long as the poison remains. These are the advantages which Siamese emissaries have been carrying and still carry into the spheres of our legitimate influence.

The British agents accredited to the King of Siam during the last twenty years have, individually and collectively, conspicuously failed to appreciate the importance of the situation as a whole, or the special dangers to British interests in the Malay Peninsula. Most astonishing, however, and most unfortunate, has been the attitude of a succession of British Ministers and Consuls towards the Siamese authorities. In spite of the warnings of those versed in Siamese methods, in spite of plain uncompromising facts, in spite of the history of the past and the

evidence of British officials who have learnt the value of Siamese assurances by sad experience, it is perhaps somewhat remarkable that the worthy gentlemen who, from time to time, represented British interests in Bangkok, have, with a marvellous unanimity, accepted all Siamese statements regarding, and most Siamese views of, every question wherein Siamese and British interests were at variance. It is surely almost time that Eastern statements should be assessed at their true value. The same lie is told by the Chinese mandarin, the Siamese functionary, or the Malay raja, with identical circumstance and the same assurances of good faith. He even takes a certain pleasure in the process, and extracts a good deal of sardonic amusement out of the ease with which he can mislead the white man. The British have learned this in Malaya, the French in Siam, and the whole Western world is either pariously dense or it must soon begin to understand the Chinese official. It may be supposed that a diplomatist is provided with these elementary scraps of knowledge, but it is eminently British to assume that an Eastern who speaks in English cannot, dare not, does not, wish to lie. After all, there is a great virtue in the university education; for the British representative will accept, without question, almost any statement made by the man who can say, "When I was up at Oxford."

That the Foreign Office should in its turn accept the views of its agents is perhaps natural, but its attitude as regards Siamese affairs can only be explained by a feeling of contemptuous indifference for the doings of an insignificant people at the other end of the world.

Placed between France and England, recognising their own insecurity and the internal rottenness of that fabric of Government, the outside of which is thinly polished to catch the Western eye, the nobles of Siam had long discussed the ultimate fate of Siam, and they had decided that whilst their country must fall under the protection of Britain or France, their desire was that Britain should be their protector. It is understood that they sought and were refused an offensive and defensive alliance with England, and it is also pretty well known that the King of Siam would gladly have made any terms with England that would have secured his own independence during his lifetime, and the succession to the throne of his own family.

The events of July 1893 so broke the health of the King of Siam that his Majesty has hardly ever been seen in public since, and several times his life has been despaired of. When the French gunboats forced the defences of the Menam, and a Council was hastily summoned, the King and his own brother, Prince Ong Noi, were for resistance, and the populace seemed to be enthusiastically in favour of fighting; but the Ministers and the members of Council were for peace, and after the lamentable fiasco in the river-forts the King lost all heart. As soon as the terms imposed by the French became known, the King and his advisers were assailed by hundreds of anonymous letters, charging them with cowardice and failure to defend the interests intrusted to them. Added to this, there were rumours of plots against the King's person and the succession of the members of his family, while the rise and fall of palace favourites was little

short of meteoric. All this has had its natural effect on the King, and so serious was his condition at one time that for some days it was not known to more than a few whether he was alive or dead.

The situation as it stood was not one that could be viewed with anything but anxiety by any Englishman with imperial instincts, while those directly interested in trade with Siam might, if they understood the circumstances, be pardoned for regarding the outlook with alarm.

The Government of Siam is entirely autocratic, and the King is not physically capable of discharging a tithe of the duties that devolve upon an absolute monarch. The Ministers are hopelessly incapable, they are torn by mutual jealousies, and they are under the corroding influence of the various palace favourites. The crowd of lesser Government officials is utterly corrupt, and the people count for nothing except to obey the orders of their chiefs.

The French have established themselves on and across the Mekong. They have troops in the richest provinces of Siam, comparatively close to Bangkok. They have agents in various parts of the country, they are registering thousands as under their protection, and they have provided themselves with a treaty filled with opportunities for reopening the most important questions conceivable — questions that might easily have involved the existence of Siam as an independent kingdom.

Meanwhile England monopolises the foreign trade of Siam, English interests in Siam are paramount, but across the southern borders of Siam, where English influence is being consolidated in regions where it has been looked up to as the

highest authority for over a century, the Siamese are doing what they can to thwart us.

This is the policy which recommends itself to Siamese Ministers, whilst they not only rely upon England for the continued integrity of Siam, but even look forward to direct English protection when next their own blunders or a recrudescence of French restlessness lead up to the final crisis. Until July 1893 the Siamese Government believed that neither France nor England would ever carry their complaints beyond the region of diplomatic remonstrance. Too late they saw their error; but while they now realise that England did not want Siam, and that France, or the colonial party in France, wished to absorb this kingdom as it had absorbed Annam, Tongking, and Cambodia, they still believed that whether the British Lion would ever resent the twisting of his tail by a small Asiatic Power or not, he would certainly strain every nerve to prevent a new Eastern difficulty being forced upon him in the shape of an Anglo-French frontier.

The details of the problem once understood, a simple solution seemed to be a request from the Siamese for British protection, because if that were not secured, at least the request might reasonably be expected to lead to a guarantee by England and France of Siamese independence within the borders of a territory that would be recognised by France and England as purely Siamese. That solution was much to be desired, for it would secure such finality as questions of this kind admit of, it would put an end to many causes of jealousy between France and England as regards Siam, it would mean a new era of prosperity and justice in some dark places of the

Malay Peninsula, and it would give "Young Siam" a last opportunity of proving whether it is capable of casting off the reproach which now attaches to its spurious civilisation, and whether it has enough ability, vigour, and sense of right to rule the Siamese people with justice and some enlightenment, while turning to the best advantage the resources with which the kingdom has been so richly dowered.

It is probable that the course above indicated might and would have been taken earlier but for the fact that in a matter of this kind the King alone could take the initiative, and he hesitated to do anything that might seem likely to curtail his absolute authority in Siam or his influence beyond its proper borders. That feeble health which has for so long shut his Majesty off from any real participation in State affairs is, however, a cogent reason why, in the interests of Siam, of England, and of France, a mine of such possible dangers should not be left exposed to the match of the first comer, whether applied by accident or design; and it is therefore satisfactory to know that, however the arrangement was brought about, England and France have mutually bound themselves to abstain from interference in, and will preserve the independence of, the central and most important region of Siam.

The treaty is not confined to Siamese affairs; but this article is concerned with them alone, and the clauses which refer to them are the following:—

1. The Governments of Great Britain and France engage to one another that neither of them will, without the consent of the other, in any case or under any pretext, advance their armed forces into

the region which is comprised in the basins of the Petcha Bouri, Meiklong, Menam, and Bang Pa Kong (Petriou) rivers and their respective tributaries, together with the extent of coast from Muong Bang Tapan to Muong Pase, the basins of the rivers on which those two places are situated, and the basins of the other rivers, the estuaries of which are included in that coast; and including also the territory lying to the north of the basin of the Menam, and situated between the Anglo-Siamese frontier, the Mekong river, and the eastern watershed of the Me Ing. They further engage not to acquire within this region any special privilege or advantage which shall not be enjoyed in common by, or equally open to, Great Britain and France, and their nationals and dependents. These stipulations, however, shall not be interpreted as derogating from the special clauses which, in virtue of the treaty concluded on the 3d October 1893 between France and Siam, apply to a zone of 25 kilometres on the right bank of the Mekong and to the navigation of that river.

2. Nothing in the foregoing clause shall hinder any action on which the two Powers may agree, and which they shall think necessary in order to uphold the independence of the kingdom of Siam. But they engage not to enter into any separate agreement permitting a third Power to take any action from which they are bound by the present declaration themselves to abstain.

3. From the mouth of the Nam Huok northwards as far as the Chinese frontier the *thalweg* of the Mekong shall form the limit of the possessions or spheres of influence of Great Britain and France. It is agreed that the

nationals and dependents of each of the two countries shall not exercise any jurisdiction or authority within the possession or sphere of influence of the other.

The police of the islands in this part of the river which are separated from the British shore by a branch of the river shall, so long as they are thus separated, be intrusted to the French authorities. The fishery shall be open to the inhabitants of both banks.

When forwarding the treaty to our Ambassador in Paris, Lord Salisbury sent with it a letter of explanation which contains the following passages :—

“The most important provision which it contains is that which marks out for special treatment, as between the two Powers, that portion of Siam which is comprised within the drainage basin of the Menam, and of the coast streams of a corresponding longitude. Within this area the two Powers undertake that they will not operate by their military or naval forces except so far as they may do it in concert for any purpose which may be required for maintaining the independence of Siam. They also undertake not to acquire within that area any privilege or commercial facilities which are not extended to both of them. . . .

“We fully recognise the rights of Siam to the full and undisturbed enjoyment, in accordance with long usage, or with existing treaties, of the entire territory comprised within her dominions ; and nothing in our present action would detract in any degree from the validity of the rights of the King of Siam to other portions of his territory which are not affected by this treaty. We have selected a particular area for the application of the stipulations of this treaty, not because the title of the King of Siam to other portions of his dominions is less valid, but because it is the area which affects our interests as a commercial nation. . . .

“But the history of the region in which Siam is situated has not in

recent years been favourable to the extension of industrial enterprise or to the growth of that confidence which is the first condition of material improvement. . . .

“The events of this recent history certainly have a tendency to encourage doubts of the stability of the Siamese dominion ; and without in any degree sharing in those doubts, or admitting the possibility, within any future with which we have to deal, of the Siamese independence being compromised, her Majesty's Government could not but feel that there would be an advantage in giving some security to the commercial world that, in regard to the region where the most active development is likely to take place, no further disturbances of territorial ownership are to be apprehended.”

In other words, the English and French Governments, mindful of the past and apprehensive of the future, have decided to preserve the independence of the valley of the Menam, the most populous, best cultivated, and richest district of the Siamese kingdom, and they have agreed to guarantee that territory from interference. While abandoning the idea of an impossible buffer State in the far north of the river Mekong, they have created a real buffer State in Central Siam—a State which roughly extends from Kieng Sen in the north to the Gulf of Siam, which includes the whole watershed of the Menam river as far as that river is in Siamese territory, and which has a coast-line from Tong Lan on the west to the Parat river on the east : the exact points stated in the treaty are Muong Bang Tapan to Muong Pase, but these places will probably not be found on any map available to the general public. On the British side of this guaranteed reserve there is a small tract of country to the eastward of Zimmé, and a larger territory to the south of the Isthmus of Kra, extending down

the Malay Peninsula to the confines of Siamese influence. On the eastern or French side there is an immense block of country enclosed between the eastern boundary of the Reserve and the French recently constituted boundary on the Mekong river.

It is perhaps needless to speculate as to what will happen in those regions on the west, south, and east of the Reserve which are now described as "the remainder of the Siamese kingdom." It might also be difficult to guess what the views of the King of Siam and his Ministers will be in regard to the treaty just concluded; but it is evident that French and English statesmen, realising the necessity of defining their respective positions for the sake of peace, and to secure better relations between the two countries, have wisely arrived at an understanding which appears likely to satisfy the conditions. Their action ought to be acceptable to Siam, for it assures that country of independent authority over a territory which is more than large enough to give ample scope to the administrative skill of the King's most able advisers, while the assurance cannot fail to relieve his Majesty's mind of a great anxiety.

It only remains for the British and French peoples to further the hope expressed in the following passage from the despatch of the British Foreign Minister to Baron de Courcel :—

"You state that your Government feel confident that the conclusion of these negotiations, by giving evidence of the good understanding established between Great Britain and France, will be calculated to exercise a salutary influence over the populations subject to the authority of the two countries or dwelling in the neighbourhood of their respective possessions.

"You add that the Declaration will, in particular, give evidence of the joint solicitude of the two Governments for the security and stability of the Kingdom of Siam, and that the assurances which they have exchanged imply the desire on the part of each of them to maintain with that kingdom the most friendly relations, and to respect existing Conventions.

"I have pleasure in receiving and taking note of this statement of the views and intentions of your Government, and in offering you the same assurances on the part of the Government of Her Britannic Majesty."

Prophecy is proverbially dangerous, not only to the prophet's reputation but to the results he foretells, and in the latter sense it is often unwise. It is well, however, to state the actual advantages of the recently concluded treaty as it stands, and to instance some of the possibilities to which it opens the door :—

A source of serious difficulty with France has been removed.

The peculiar danger of the situation was that the continuance of friendly relations did not depend on French and English interests and susceptibilities alone, but the hands of either of those Governments might at any time be forced by the action of the Siamese.

The Siamese have no longer the power to embroil the two great Powers.

The uncertain limits of British and French spheres of influence in the neighbourhood of Siamese borders have been defined, and schemes of railway construction, important commercial undertakings, and great projects of trade development, hitherto hampered or throttled at the outset by territorial uncertainties, can now be taken up with confidence.

The extension of British influence throughout the Malay Peninsula, the development of those

rich regions, and the junction of the railway-systems of Burmah and Malaya, with the rounding off of British possessions—as the French have secured the rounding off of their Far Eastern territories—is now only a matter of time; and we have a right to believe that our legitimate aspirations can be satisfied without arousing any jealousy in France.

These are great advantages (the gains to France are at least as great), and the thanks of his countrymen are due to Lord Salisbury for grasping the nettle which only stung his predecessor. They are due to him for realising the true magnitude of the issues at stake, and for rescuing British interests from a particularly diffi-

cult situation, complicated by past blunders and by years of neglect and ignorance. But perhaps our best thanks are due to the Prime Minister for removing a source of irritation between England and France; and we may cordially acknowledge that he has ably handled a difficult problem, and we unite with him in his hope that Frenchmen and Englishmen will recognise that their statesmen approached and dealt with a thorny question in the earnest desire to thereby remove one possible cause of stumbling or conflict from the paths of two great and friendly nations, whose highest objects in the East have ever been the help of the oppressed and the advancement of freedom and civilisation.

THE OPENING SESSION.

THE session of many hopes and many anxieties has now commenced,—hopes and anxieties of more than usual intensity, since they embrace the security of our colonial empire, the honour of the British name, and religious and economic questions not only of the profoundest importance, but considered by large and influential classes, perhaps by the majority of the whole nation, as matters of life and death. We have never been so near a European war, though the immediate danger has passed away, since 1853. A despairing cry for help ascends from a ruined agriculture, once our pride and boast; mingled with a less loud but not less earnest appeal for protection against the deeply laid conspiracy which threatens our national Christianity.

Parliament was opened on the 11th of February, and the debate on the Address concluded somewhat suddenly just a week afterwards. It happened unluckily that the intervention of Foreign Affairs at the last moment has made some change in the prospects of legislation. We never expected that the Government would undertake more than two or three great measures in one session; and it is probable that in no case would they have gone beyond the three which are now announced—Agricultural Relief, Voluntary Schools, and Employers' Liability. But the time afforded for the consideration of these highly contentious questions has been shortened by the necessity of bringing before Parliament our difficulties in America, Africa, and Asia Minor; and still further by the necessity arising

out of these for adding very largely to our Naval strength: constituting an additional reason for Mr Balfour's Resolutions, referred to at the conclusion of our article. The Queen's speech, accordingly, which but a few months ago seemed likely to be one of the shortest on record, has by these circumstances been converted into one of the longest. Sixteen paragraphs are given to the foreign and colonial subjects already mentioned, and just half that number to the domestic reforms which promised at one time to be the predominant, if not the exclusive, topic of interest when Parliament opened. We shall not, of course, on the present occasion enter in any detail upon the questions brought before us by her Majesty, of which almost every one would require an article to itself. But we shall consider what light is thrown upon them by the debate which followed; as well as on the indications which they afford of the tone and temper in which the Opposition seems likely to be conducted.

It will be observed that in the speech itself, the references to Venezuela, Armenia, and the Transvaal are extremely guarded, and that the most which they convey is that affairs are in a train for settlement, the progress already made towards it not having reached a point which can be conveniently indicated to the public. Diplomacy has a language of its own, which only experts can read off at sight; and it may be that the "wish expressed by the United States to co-operate with us" in arranging the Venezuelan dispute, may mean

a great deal more than it appears to mean to the ordinary reader. Her Majesty "sympathises" with this wish, and "trusts that further negotiations will lead to a satisfactory settlement." We hope so too. The paragraph on Armenia tells us that the Sultan has "sanctioned" the reforms for which, in conjunction with France and Russia, Great Britain thought it necessary to press. We know very well that when a man's affairs get into a state of hopeless embarrassment, he will sign anything to get a temporary respite from importunity, or a temporary supply of cash. What matters it to him whether he is charged thirty, fifty, or a hundred and fifty per cent. As he never means to meet the bills, it is all one. It seems to be pretty much the same with the Sultan and his sanctions. Of course he had to keep up appearances and make difficulties. But that is all part of the game. Lord Salisbury still thinks that he may be persuaded to do something if he is allowed sufficient time. But it is extremely significant that no such expectation finds its way into the Queen's speech. We do not meet with the shadow of a suggestion to that effect. There is no reference to "negotiations" which may lead to satisfactory results—merely mention of the fact that sanction has been formally given to certain measures of which no more has been heard, and which remain, as they are probably destined to remain, mere paper reforms. We cannot help thinking that this omission is pregnant with meaning. If Russia has taken the Sultan's affairs into her own hands, it is perfectly intelligible. In that case, whatever may have passed between them, the present policy of Russia is clear. She is ready to humour

the Sultan, and by so doing to help him on the road to ruin. She is the accommodating friend who hopes to get the estate cheap, when the present proprietor is bankrupt. Russia, in fact, is playing Glossin to the Sultan's Laird of Ellangowan. England is forced for the present to look on at the game without the power to interrupt it. If we have to fight in the long-run to prevent the consequences, that is no reason why we should go to war now, with the chapter of accidents still to be unfolded which may possibly do our work for us.

That we were bound to intervene single-handed on behalf of the Armenians is a ridiculous assertion that will not bear a moment's examination. England has incurred no obligations except as one of a confederacy formed for certain definite objects. If the other members of it take a view of these obligations different from that of England, there is no help for it. The judgment of the court is determined by the majority; and England can only fall back on the instrument known as moral force, which, discredited as it is in the case of Turkey, has not yet, in the opinion of Lord Salisbury, become totally impotent.

In regard to the Transvaal, the Speech from the Throne professes faith in the intentions of President Kruger to redress the grievances of the Uitlanders. It was unnecessary—it would, indeed, have been undignified—to say more. But what was unsaid is nevertheless the most important part of the subject. The real difficulty that we shall have with Kruger evidently relates to the suzerainty. He himself, if he is the wise man which the Royal Speech repre-

sents him to be, must know very well that if political rights are not now accorded to the Uitlanders, in a very few years they will seize them; and if he is the moderate man which, on the same authority, we are willing to believe, he will prefer a peaceful revolution to a bloody one. But the suzerainty is another affair. He may possibly think that, if the Uitlanders were satisfied, he could unite the whole Transvaal in the demand for independence, and extort it from England as the Convention of Pretoria was extorted. It is needless to say that he was never more mistaken in his life. But it is to what is passing in his mind at this moment, on the question of allegiance, that the highest interest of the South African question attaches; and to this it was difficult, if not impossible, for the Royal Speech to allude.

The paragraphs relating to domestic affairs commence with the increase of the navy, and are followed up by the three that we have mentioned, embracing measures for the relief of agriculture, for the assistance of voluntary schools, and for settling the liability of employers to compensate their workmen for injuries sustained in their employment—our old friend the Employers' Liability Bill. After this comes a Land Bill for Ireland, and then a number of measures set down together in the same paragraph, being such, we suppose, as the Government, while making every effort to promote, do not feel pledged to carry. The most important of these concern the importation of destitute aliens, the water-supply of London, and the construction of light railways in the United Kingdom.

As far as the Session has yet

gone, the tone of the Opposition speeches on foreign affairs has, with one or two exceptions, been fairly moderate and patriotic. But Lord Rosebery, in the Lords, was unable to conceal his chagrin at the praise which has been lavished on Mr Chamberlain. I could have done it just as well, he seems to say. Luckily, perhaps, for both himself and us, he has no opportunity of trying the experiment, like poor Goldsmith, who broke his shin in attempting to prove how much better he could jump over a stick than the performers whom he had just witnessed. Everybody must share in Mr Chamberlain's regret that the eulogies bestowed on himself should have given pain to Lord Rosebery: and Mr Chamberlain, we may be sure, would be the first to agree with Lord Salisbury that, could they have foreseen the annoyance thus inflicted on the noble Earl, they would have exerted their influence with the newspapers to induce them to be more considerate. Unfortunately it is now too late to undo the mischief that has been done. Lord Rosebery's feelings have been hurt, and time alone can heal the smart. We will only give him one parting piece of advice, and that is, that when next they are wounded by any similar species of impertinence—an event, perhaps, not wholly impossible—he will place some check on that enchanting frankness which has ere now led him into several unfortunate predicaments.

This little outburst of wounded vanity was so natural and so human that it makes one regard with more indulgence than might otherwise have been possible some of his comments on the Queen's speech. However, there is not much in them to rouse indignation after

all. When Lord Rosebery attempts a style of high-flown irony, he is rather amusing than provoking. And when he speaks of the pride which he takes in the conduct of his own party with regard to Armenia, we feel really grateful to him for the contrast which he suggests between himself and his successors. He points, with an air of conscious virtue, to the magnanimous conduct of the Opposition in refraining from a single word which might hamper or embarrass the Government in their dealings with the Armenian question after Lord Salisbury took office. "We remained quiet, and we remained silent." So they did; but so they did also before Lord Salisbury took office. They displayed these virtues during eleven long months, in which the Armenian atrocities were proceeding unchecked. "Where, where was Roderick, then?" Had Lord Rosebery only broken silence then, the whole affair might have stood on a very different footing now. We remained quiet, and we remained silent. Thank you for these words, my lord. Lord Rosebery did not choose to probe the feelings of France and Russia on the subject: he thought it better to ask no questions, for fear of an unpleasant answer; and threw the whole burden of getting at the real truth, and bearing the responsibility of failure, on his successor. The policy was astute; but we can't say we think it was very much to boast of, and we should advise Lord Rosebery to say as little as possible in future about his silence and his quietness.

The above was Lord Salisbury's view of the matter; and had Lord Rosebery been wise, he would have allowed it to rest there. But he must needs interrupt Lord

Salisbury to say that the late Government *did* know the intentions of France and Russia. It would be charitable to Lord Rosebery to disbelieve him. However, taking him at his word, are we to suppose that this knowledge was at the bottom of his own inactivity when in office? He knew that France and Russia would neither join in, nor assent to, any military demonstration, and that it was impossible to proceed without them. This is what he says himself; and whichever way we look at it, he is in a pretty tight place. Either he knew or he did not know the mind of France and Russia. If he did not, he ought to have inquired. If he did, what becomes of his charge against Lord Salisbury? In the one case he was guilty of a great neglect of duty; in the other he is guilty of something still worse—something nearly approaching to dishonesty.

The three great questions of the moment have been so thoroughly discussed during the recess, that before Parliament met we knew almost exactly what was the Government position on each of them. Lord Salisbury merely repeated what he has said many times before, that it was impossible to point to any engagement taken by this country during the last twenty years which entailed on her the duty of interfering on behalf of the Armenians single-handed and by force of arms, or to any word uttered by himself which seemed to sanction such a notion. All our promises, engagements, or obligations in regard to this question have been joint ones. They may have given England the option, but they do not impose the duty, of a separate intervention,—two things between which that experienced

diplomatist Lord Palmerston was always very careful to discriminate. England could not persuade the other Powers to look at the Armenian atrocities from her own point of view. Compared with the interest which they took in Greece, Macedonia, and Bulgaria, their feelings towards Armenia were, in the words of Mr Goschen, "purely Platonic." They were not going to fight for that oppressed damsel; and, what is more, they were not willing that anybody else should. Even if England, in the excess of her chivalry, had undertaken to attack an army of three hundred thousand Turks in the mountains of Asia Minor, Russia would very soon have said, "If you mean to fight Turkey, you must fight me too."

If indeed Turkey had performed her own part of the bargain, the position of England might have been different. Some light was thrown on this point by the speeches of Mr Balfour and Mr Goschen. What England did undertake by the Berlin Convention was not to take up arms against Turkey if she did not reform the government of Armenia, but to stand by her in trouble if she did. In other words, we made the continuance of our engagement to maintain the Turkish empire dependent on the execution by Turkey of certain specified reforms. This was the compact; and if Turkey refuses to fulfil her own obligations, we are released from ours. Had Turkey kept faith with us, and done what she undertook to do, and had any other Power invaded Asia Minor afterwards, no doubt we should have been bound to assist her. This was the heavy responsibility referred to by Lord Carnarvon in a speech which has been much mis-

understood. Turkey herself has backed out of the bargain, and we were in no other way bound to force her to fulfil it than by withdrawing our guarantee. If Turkey thinks she can get better terms from an ancient enemy than she can from her ancient friend, she must do as she likes. She has been warned of her danger; and England has nothing to reproach herself with. Her conscience at all events is clear. We wish we could say as much of the new counsellor on whom Turkey seems at present to rely.

We hope the effect of the debate will be to cause the situation in the East to be better understood, and to correct the misrepresentations of it which the Radicals have so studiously circulated. Whether Sir William Harcourt purposely put that interpretation on Lord Carnarvon's speech which Mr Balfour showed to be erroneous, or whether he really believed in it, of course it is impossible to say. But the public will now see quite plainly what Lord Carnarvon really meant by the passage which Sir William quoted, and that whatever responsibility we may have incurred in 1878 has lapsed by the Sultan's own fault in 1896.

Sir William was more generous and more sincere than his former chief in his tribute to Mr Chamberlain, and in most of what he said on the subject of the Transvaal he showed a spirit worthy of the best traditions of the House of Commons. It is also matter for the greatest satisfaction that when Mr Balfour appealed to the House not to debate Mr Atherley Jones's amendment relating to Venezuela, on the ground that it would be injurious to the public interest, his authority was at once respected; and after a short speech,

perhaps unnecessary, from Sir William Harcourt, the subject was allowed to drop.

The subject of the Transvaal in particular was reserved for Mr Labouchere and Mr Chamberlain; or rather for Mr Chamberlain only, as Mr Labouchere, in his own words, did but ring the bell for him. The tune to which he rang it, however, was a high moral one, setting forth the iniquities of the Chartered Company in a style which might have become a bishop—a position for which, it is generally thought by his partial friends, nature intended Mr Labouchere. His amendment ran as follows:—

“And we humbly represent to your Majesty that no investigation into recent occurrences in South Africa will be complete unless it extends to the financial and political action of the Chartered Company of South Africa since your Majesty granted to certain persons the original charter under which the company is incorporated.”

And he then indulged in a long tirade against gambling in shares, against swindling the public, against what on the Stock Exchange are delicately termed “transactions,” as though he himself had only read of such things in the newspapers, and was as innocent as an angel of all such abominable doings. We don't think the Chartered Company has much to fear from censors of this description. Besides, to look at the matter from a different point of view, who will ever suppose Mr Labouchere to be in earnest about anything, unless it is about sitting on the Treasury Bench, the defeat of which laudable ambition has, we believe, occasionally galled him? But, as Sir H. Farquhar said, he was well known in the City for

turning both business and politics into burlesque, and the man who has once gained such a reputation as this is not the one suddenly to assume the airs of a rigid financial moralist with much chance of producing any effect upon the public. The new member for Marylebone made a short but matter-of-fact defence of the Chartered Company, which he said was in a perfectly sound financial position; and after another speech from Mr Buxton, late Under-Secretary for the Colonies, demanding with much emphasis that the Government should do what they had already done, Mr Chamberlain rose to make his long-expected statement. No such statements excite all the interest which they used to do, because, as we have more than once pointed out, the edge of the public appetite is nowadays always taken off beforehand by the press and the platform. But the world was curious nevertheless to hear from Mr Chamberlain's own lips, in his place in Parliament, a connected and well-digested version of the whole affair, the history of which had only been picked up in a fragmentary manner, coloured unavoidably with many prejudices and misconceptions.

Mr Chamberlain began by saying he had very little that was new to tell the House; and we have already glanced at what seems to be the pith and marrow of the question, on which Mr Chamberlain's speech could not in the nature of things throw any further light. He has, however, pointed out to President Kruger that if he was afraid of extending the suffrage to the Uitlanders lest they should swamp the Boers in the National Assembly, he must consider what alternative scheme he has to suggest that will ultim-

ately prevent a civil war, and the overthrow of the Dutch oligarchy by more violent means. That is how the matter stands at present. Mr Chamberlain attaches no importance to his own scheme of local self-government for the Randt, which he is quite willing to withdraw. He is even ready to admit that the publication of his despatch may have been a mistake, the result of attempting "to diplomatise on new methods." But the fact remains that if President Kruger will neither consent to give the Uitlanders a share in the government of the Transvaal nor give them a government of their own, he must find a third way out of the difficulty for himself.

One point on which the debate throws some light is the question of President Kruger's appeal to Germany. Sir W. Harcourt finds fault with Lord Salisbury for asserting it as a fact when he could not have known it to be one, since Baron von Marschall, the German Foreign Minister, has since asserted that he knew nothing about it. Mr Balfour's answer is worth noting. He says nothing at all about Baron von Marschall's denial, leaving us to form our own opinion. But he says Lord Salisbury had two pieces of evidence before him, which abundantly justified his statement. The first was a telegram received from our agent-general in the Transvaal, and marked "urgent," stating that he had just been informed, on unquestionable authority, that the President had applied both to Germany and France for assistance. The second was, that almost immediately afterwards we heard of the proposal of Germany to land a body of marines in Delagoa Bay. This is "admitted." Was Germany, then, about to

send troops to the assistance of President Kruger without being asked? Two such facts as the above, so closely connected with each other, may stagger even those who are disposed to have the strongest faith in diplomatic denials.

With the following extract from Mr Balfour's speech relating to the Chartered Company we must pass on to a different class of subjects :

"They themselves believe, rightly or wrongly, that they have deserved well of this country by the action they have taken in South Africa. They think that the policy they have pursued shows both their energy and public spirit, and if their protestations are to be believed, *as I think they are*, they should be the last to object to the inquiry which my right hon. friend has suggested."

Though the tone of the Opposition in relation to foreign affairs has been upon the whole moderate, and even courteous, this must not throw us off our guard. Armenia, Venezuela, and South Africa, though presenting questions acutely critical at the present moment, are not always with us. They will, we hope, pass away and leave us again face to face with those internal problems to the solution of which the public has been so long looking forward. What, then, we have to ask ourselves, will be the attitude adopted by the Opposition leaders towards the domestic legislation of the Government? And by domestic legislation let it be understood that we refer to British legislation only. Of Irish there has been no dearth: and the question is the more interesting that the two parties now confront each other on a footing to which they have been almost entire strangers for more than half a century.

No Minister with as powerful a majority as Lord Salisbury's has ever met Parliament with such unlimited credit since Sir Robert Peel took his seat on the Treasury Bench in 1841. After the catastrophe of 1846 the days of large majorities were over, and it required a new distribution of the franchise to revive them. This was the effect of the Reform Bill of 1866. Mr Gladstone came into office in 1869 with all the power that had been wielded either by Sir Robert Peel or Lord Grey; but it had been given to him exclusively for one object, the disestablishment and disendowment of the Church in Ireland. It is doubtful if either his Education Bill or his Licensing Bill would have obtained the support of public opinion in 1868. Nothing had been said about either; and at the next dissolution the country showed pretty plainly what it thought about the first, and two years afterwards approved an amendment of the second. The confidence extended to Mr Gladstone at the general election did not embrace legislation of this kind, and as soon as his Irish measures were completed, his majority began to melt away. In the three last years of his administration he lost twenty-one seats and did not gain a single one.

Lord Beaconsfield's majority in 1874 was a strictly party majority, which Sir Robert Peel's was not, and it was to a large extent a negative majority, which Sir Robert Peel's was not. The country looked to Sir Robert for a great constructive policy. It took refuge in Conservatism from the Whigs, and so far the election of 1841 resembled that of 1874: in both instances weariness of Whig

or Liberal government was an important factor in the result; but in the one case it was the dominant, in the other the subordinate, element. Lord Beaconsfield can hardly be said to have come into office as the representative of any widespread national convictions. The nation was tired of tropical legislation, and panted for a more temperate zone. But this was not the situation of affairs in the year 1840. Lord Melbourne had not been at all tropical. The country did not fly to Sir Robert Peel for "repose." And this fact alone distinguishes 1874 from 1841, while it points forward to a greater similarity between 1841 and 1895.

The election of 1880 was no vote of confidence in Mr Gladstone. Had the professors of "plain Whig principles" foreseen what was to follow he would have had a much smaller majority than he got, even if he had got any at all. The country looked forward to a Granville-Hartington administration. In 1885 Mr Gladstone once more came back with a large majority; but it was a majority returned by a single newly enfranchised class, deluded by a special cry, and liable to dissolution as soon as the delusion faded. Though the Ministerial majority, even without the Irish vote, was equal to Sir Robert Peel's, it was not a national majority; it represented no general national confidence in which even the enemy participated: the Prime Minister had no unlimited credit, and he knew it; hence his recourse to the Swiss Guard.

The general election of 1886 turned, as others had done, on a single issue. The Government sat from 1886 to 1892 as an anti-Home-Rule Government. They passed many useful measures, and

one highly important one, for which the predominant partner was duly grateful. But they did not start on their career with the general understanding that the nation was willing to trust them with the settlement of numerous important questions, the how and the when being left absolutely at their own discretion, and a *carte blanche* given them for seven years. As the vision of Home Rule receded into the distance, Government began to lose seats: they lost twenty before Parliament was dissolved.

Now, for the first time for fifty years, we have a Government with a commanding majority not returned on any one prominent question, but in virtue of the general confidence reposed in them. The election of 1895 amounts, we repeat, to a general vote of confidence all round. The nation has now made up its mind, which in 1886, except on the one question of Home Rule, it had not done. Once more we have a great Conservative party, representing, like Peel's, not only the regular registered supporters who fight for their flag as a matter of course, but all that floating balance of independent opinion which, sometimes veering to one side sometimes to the other, has now settled down permanently on the side of the Conservatives. This great national party is founded on a broad basis, and its representatives in the House of Commons have a moral power at their back which the Opposition will find it difficult to ignore. If the Liberal Unionists still like to wear a separate uniform, to bear a name of their own, and to cherish a special tradition, let them do so by all means. But they belong to the Conservative party just as truly as a Highland regiment belongs to the British

army. Whether the policy recommended in the Duke of Devonshire's letter be the best possible policy for the common cause is perhaps open to question. He thinks that by keeping the appellation of Liberal, more converts may be attracted to the alliance than it might otherwise secure. But the numerical strength of a party should never be in excess of its power of cohesion. For it may happen in that case that when the inevitable parting comes, the seceders may carry away with them more than the converts brought. However, that is nothing to our immediate purpose. Unity without uniformity will do very well for the present: and seeing both the quantity and the quality of the strength possessed by the Conservatives, is it likely, we may ask, that the Opposition will choose to break their necks against it?

We appeal from the New Opposition to the Old; from the bad precedents set up in recent times to the better practice of Peel, Russell, and Derby. It is impossible to deny that the measures brought forward by the present Government represent the voice of the nation. If the Opposition leaders set themselves to fight against this on one point, why not on others? either because they are before or because they are behind the age. It is quite certain that the public, at the last general election, spoke out decisively on the education question against the aggressive secularism of Mr Asquith and his school. Are the Opposition to be numbered with those who "won't take No for an answer," and to go on forcing their own crotchets on an unwilling nation to the end of time, under the pre-

tence that the Liberal party have some vague Eldorado in store for the working classes, to be revealed in their own good time, to which no date can be affixed? Where and oh where is this Better Land? The labourer only knows that eye hath not seen it. He looks to Home Rule; but that rather shuts out the view. He looks to Disestablishment; but finds he would be all the worse for it. He is doubtful whether it would be a better land in which there was no beer. He looks, in fact, through the whole programme; but looks in vain. The better land is not there!

Now, it is pretty clear that if, trusting to the confidence inspired by these shadowy suggestions, the Opposition goes to work to flout the religious convictions of three-fourths of the United Kingdom, they will play into the hands of their adversaries with a fatuity of which we can hardly think them capable. However, Mr Asquith threatens that he will; and Mr Balfour very pithily replies, I only wish you would. In Mr Shaw Lefevre we have as bitterly prejudiced a pedant on the agricultural question as Mr Asquith is on education. He has already disgusted the majority of his colleagues on the Agricultural Commission. And if he is as blind as Mr Asquith appears to be to the changed position of parties, and to the different foundation on which the Government now rests compared with the footing on which it has generally stood during the last fifty years, he will probably give a great deal of trouble during the progress of the Agricultural measures. Whether the champions of Trade Unionism will think it worth their while, when it comes to the point, to challenge the ver-

dict of the country on the question of Free Labour, remains to be seen.

We have now only to repeat, in as few words as possible, the principal points on which the Opposition, if they understand their own interests, to say nothing of the public good, will concentrate their attention. They will see that within the last fifteen years parties have changed places no less than six times: with the result that only three measures of first-class importance, or which had any pretension to be called more than stop-gaps, have been added to the Statute-Book. These are, the extension of the franchise, the Factory and Workshops Bill, and the transfer of county government to elective bodies. Useful bills have been passed on a variety of subjects. But what we mean is, that they are all brought up again much as if nothing had been done. There are several questions on which, between 1886 and 1892, Lord Salisbury could have passed complete measures, and so have got them out of the way for perhaps another generation if he had been allowed fair play. But the New Opposition was fatal to them. There still remain nearly a dozen of immense practical importance, which have been under public consideration more or less during the whole of this period, of which not one has yet been settled. Church patronage and discipline, labour and capital, agricultural distress, the housing of the working class, immigration of aliens, the marking of goods, secondary education, the amendment of the Poor Law, the claims of temperance, acquisition of land by peasantry, tithe, railway rates, make up a goodly list, to which may now be added primary educa-

tion and municipal reform. Of these questions eight are long-standing ones, which have been ripe for solution many years, but have all been postponed owing to the irreconcilable and intractable spirit in which the business of Opposition has been conducted, and the determination that the men in power shall not have the credit, if it can possibly be prevented, of passing a single useful measure. Both parties have been guilty of this fault to some extent, but in very unequal degrees; and now we ask men like Sir W. Harcourt and Mr Asquith whether the public, looking back and comparing the work done between 1880 and 1895 with the work done between 1880 and 1869, will fail to put the saddle on the right horse, or to declare that this kind of thing must cease. When the country has spoken its mind plainly—when it has exhibited not a mere party majority, but a national majority in favour of certain principles and statesmen—its verdict must be respected. It has been the refusal of the Liberals to recognise the moral claim of any majority not proceeding from their own ranks which has made them in the truest sense of the word obstructives, and has been at the bottom of the legislative sterility of the last fifteen years. Now that the Opposition have no excuse for saying that the nation and the Government are not at one; now that a majority comprising nearly two-thirds of the House of Commons and nearly three-fourths of the British representatives, who alone are concerned with the measures we have here enumerated, is arrayed on the side of the Government, will not the Liberal party accept the situation, and rather follow the lead indicated by Sir William Harcourt than the path

marked out by Lord Rosebery and Mr Asquith?

The country is determined that this majority at all events shall not be thrown away as others have been. The people by this time know exactly what they want, and they have deliberately chosen a Unionist Government to supply it. The Liberal party cannot prevent it from being done in the long-run. But they can impede it; and possibly by long worry, and vexatious interference, wear out the patience of Ministers, and cause some of their plans to be diluted or abandoned. This is what they did with the Parish Councils Bill and some others in the Parliament of 1886. Mr Balfour has warned us that the power of an Opposition to obstruct must not be measured by its numbers. The Ministry are confronted by great debating power, by veteran strategists as full of wiles and as empty of scruples as Ulysses. The Unionist party must not suppose that they have no rocks or shoals ahead of them. And a pretty strong proof of what Mr Balfour considers possible is afforded by the Resolutions he introduced on the 20th of February in regard to Committee of Supply. The gist of them is that Government is to assign every Friday to Supply; that only twenty days in all are to be devoted to it; and that the discussion shall terminate on the 5th of August. The object, of course, is to ensure to the Government more time for the work of legislation, and to prevent the waste occasioned by rambling debates on Supply, undertaken very frequently for the sole purpose of obstruction. We entirely agree with the principle of the Resolutions, and to all such as object to the application of the closure to Supply we recommend the admir-

able remarks of Mr Balfour on the difference between Supply and bills, towards the close of his introductory speech. So great an innovation cannot be expected to pass without severe criticism.

But what we hope for is, that the Opposition will come to recognise before it is too late that it is not for their own interest to persevere in a policy of war to the knife. They were not turned out of office by any trick, misrepresentation, or intrigue; by any stroke of party craft; by any gust of popular passion; but by the deliberate judgment of Great Britain, founded not on any one particular incident, but on a long and varied experience, embracing not only the Ministry of 1892, but also the Ministry of 1880. All classes in turn have tried them and found them wanting, with perhaps the solitary exception of the more violent political Nonconformists. *Securus judicat orbis Britannicus!* It is useless to quote the general election of 1892, for in that ap-

peal to the people the British majority was still sustained. Leaving out both Irish Nationalists and Irish Unionists, the Unionist party in Great Britain had in that year a clear majority of twenty. The predominant partner was still staunch. Thus there has been for ten years a sustained declaration of British opinion against Radical Liberalism. It has fluctuated in strength, as was only to be expected; but it has never been interrupted. And at the last appeal of all it was pronounced more forcibly than ever. Government are now, therefore, in a position to demand, though of course they cannot exact, a return to an earlier and better system; and if the Radicals refuse it,—if they steadily ignore the changed conditions under which the campaign opens,—then we shall be able to say with Mr Balfour that, however much we may regret it upon public grounds, from a mere party point of view there is nothing so much to be desired.

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HILDA STRAFFORD: A CALIFORNIAN STORY.¹

BY BEATRICE HARRADEN.

CHAPTER I.—WOULD IT SMILE TO HER?

THE day had come at last.

Robert Strafford glanced around at the isolated spot which he had chosen for his ranch, and was seized with more terrible misgivings than had ever before overwhelmed him in moments of doubt.

Scores of times he had tried to put himself in her place, and to look at the country with her eyes. Would it, could it, smile to her? He had put off her coming until the early spring, so that she might see this new strange land at its best, when the rains had begun to fall and the grass was springing up, and plain and slope were donning a faint green garment toning each day to a richer hue, when tiny ferns were thrusting out their

heads from the dry ground, and here and there a wild flower arose, welcome heralds of the bounty which Nature would soon be dispensing with generous hand, but after a long delay. Such a long delay, indeed, that a new-comer to Southern California might well think that Nature, so liberal in her gifts to other lands, had shown only scanty favour to this child of hers, clothing her in dusty and unattractive attire, and refusing her every kind of tender grace. But when the long months of summer heat are over, she begins to work her miracle, and those who have eyes to see and hearts to understand will learn how dearly she loves this land of sunshine, and

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how in her own good time she showers her jewels upon it.

So just now, when this wonderful change was stealing over the country, Robert Strafford looked eagerly for the arrival of Hilda Lester, who had been engaged to him for more than three years, and who was at length able to break away from her home-ties and marry him; when there was a mystic glamour in the air, and a most caressing softness; when the lemon-trees were full of promise, and some of them full of plenty; when the little ranch, so carefully worked and so faithfully nursed, seemed at its very best, and well repaid Robert Strafford for his untiring labour.

He sat on the bench in front of his barn, smoking his pipe and glancing with pride at his little estate on the slope of the hill. He loved it so much that he had learnt to think it even beautiful, and it was only now and then that he had any serious misgivings about the impression it would produce on any one unaccustomed to the South Californian scenery. But now he was seized with overwhelming doubt, and he took his pipe from his mouth, and covered his tired-looking face with his hands. Nellie, the white pointer, stirred uneasily and then got up and rubbed herself against him.

"Dear old girl," he said, caressing her. "You have such a faithful heart. I'm all right, old girl, I'm only down in the dumps a little."

Suddenly the sound of horse's hoofs was heard, and Nellie darted down the hill barking, and then came up the hill in triumph, now and again making jumps of greeting to Ben Overleigh's pretty little chestnut mare Fanny.

Ben Overleigh swung off his horse and hitched her to the post,

and then turned quietly to his friend, who had not risen from the bench, but sat in the same listless position as before.

"Well now," said Ben Overleigh, sinking down beside him, "and I tell you, Bob, you've made a deuced pretty little garden for her. That deaf old woman with the ear-trumpet has not grown finer violets than those yonder; and as for your roses, you could not find any better in Santa Barbara itself. I can't say much for the grass-plot at present. It reminds me rather of a bald man's head. But the creepers are just first rate, especially the ones I planted. And there isn't a bonnier little ranch than yours in the whole neighbourhood. If my lemons were coming on as well as yours, nothing on earth should prevent me from stepping over to the dear old country for a few weeks."

Robert Strafford looked up and smiled.

"The trees certainly are doing splendidly," he said, with some pride. "I know I've given them the best part of my strength and time these last three years. There ought to be some return for that, oughtn't there, Ben?"

Ben made no answer, but puffed at his pipe, and Robert Strafford continued:—

"You see, Hilda and I had been engaged for some time, and things did not go well with me in the old country,—I couldn't make my niche for myself like other fellows seem able to do,—and then there came that wretched illness of mine, which crippled all my best abilities for the time. So when at last I set to work again, I felt I must leave no stone unturned to grasp some kind of a success: here was a new life and a new material, and I vowed I would contrive something out of it for myself and Hilda."

He paused a moment, and he came closer to Ben Overleigh.

"But I don't know how I ever dared hope that she would come out here," he said, half dreamily. "I've longed for it and dreaded it, and longed for it and dreaded it. If I were to have a message now to say she had thrown it up, I don't suppose I should ever want to smile again. But that is not the worst thing that would happen to one. I dread something far more—her disappointment, her scorn; for, when all is done and said, it is a wretched land, barren and bereft, and you know yourself how the women suffer here. They all hate it. Something dies down in them. You have only got to look at them to know. They have lost the power of caring. I've seen it over and over again, and then I have cursed my lemon-trees. And I tell you, Ben, I feel so played out by work and doubt, and so overshadowed, that if Hilda hates the whole thing, it will just be the death of me. It will kill me outright."

Ben Overleigh got up and shook himself, and then relieved his feelings in a succession of ranch-life expletives, given forth with calm deliberation and in a particularly musical voice, which was one of Ben's most charming characteristics. He had many others too: his strong manly presence, his innate chivalry to every one and everything, and his quiet loyalty, made him an attractive personality in the valley; and his most original and courteous manner of swearing would have propitiated the very sternest of tract-distributors. He was a good friend, too, and had long ago attached himself to Robert Strafford, and looked after him and mothered him up in his own manly tender fashion; and now he glanced at the young

fellow who was going to bring his bride home on the morrow, and he wondered what words of encouragement he could speak so that his comrade might take heart and throw off this overwhelming depression.

"That's enough of this nonsense," he said, cheerily, as he stood and faced his friend. "Come and show me what you've done to make the house look pretty. And see here, old man, I've brought two or three odd things along with me. I saw them in town the other day, and thought they might please her ladyship when she arrives. I stake my reputation particularly on this lamp-shade. And here's a tablecloth from the Chinese shop, and here's a vase for flowers, and here's a toasting-fork."

They had gone into the house, and Ben Overleigh had laid his treasures one by one on the table. He looked around, and realised for the first time that Robert Strafford was offering but a desolate home to his bride. Outside at least there were flowers and creepers, and ranges of splendid mountains, and beautiful soft lights and shades changing constantly, and fragrance in the air born of spring; but inside this dreary little house there was nothing to cast a glamour of cheerfulness. Nothing. For the moment Ben's heart sank, but when he glanced at his friend he forced himself to smile approvingly.

"You've bought a capital little coal-oil stove, Bob," he said. "That is the best kind, undoubtedly. I'm going to have scores of cosy meals off that, I can tell you. I think you could have done with two or three more saucepans, old man. But that is as nice a little stove as you'll see anywhere. A rocking-chair! good. And a cushion too, by Jove! And a book-shelf, with six brand-new books on it,

including George Meredith's last novel and Ibsen's new play."

"Hilda is fond of reading," said Robert Strafford, gaining courage from his friend's approval.

"And some curtains," continued Ben. "And a deuced pretty pattern too."

"I chose them myself," said the other, smiling proudly, — "and, what's more, I stitched them myself."

And so they went on, Ben giving comfort and Bob taking it; and then they made a few alterations in the arrangement of the furniture, and they tried the effect of the table-cloth and the lamp-shade, and Bob put a few flowers in the vase, and stood at the door to see how everything looked.

"Will it smile to her, will it smile to her, I wonder?" he said, anxiously.

"Of course it will," said Ben, also stepping back to see the whole effect. "That lamp-shade and that table-cloth and that vase and that toasting-fork settle the whole matter, in my mind!"

"If there were only some nice neighbours," said Robert Strafford. "But there isn't a soul within six miles."

"You are surely forgetting the deaf lady with the ear-trumpet," remarked Ben, mischievously.

"Don't be a fool, Ben," said Robert Strafford, shortly.

"She is not exactly a stimulating companion," continued Ben, composedly, "but she is better than no one at all. And then there's myself. I also am better than no one at all. I don't think you do so badly after all, in spite of your grumblings. Then eight miles off live Lauderdale and Holles and Graham. Since Jesse Holles returned from his travels, as merry a little company as you would wish to see anywhere."

"Hilda is so fond of music," said Robert Strafford, sadly, "and I have no piano for her as yet."

"That is soon remedied," answered Ben. "But why didn't you tell me these things before? The ear-trumpet lady has a piano, and I daresay with a little coaxing she would lend it to you. I'm rather clever at coaxing through a trumpet; and then, too, she rather likes me. I have such a gentle voice, you know, and I believe my moustache is the exact reproduction of one owned by her dead nephew. Her dead nephew certainly must have had an uncommonly fine moustache! Well, about the piano. I'll see what I can do; and meanwhile, for pity's sake, cheer up."

He put his hand kindly on his friend's shoulders.

"Yes, Bob, I mean what I say," he continued; "for pity's sake, cheer up, and don't be receiving her ladyship with the countenance of a boiled ghost. That will depress her far more than anything in poor old California. Be your old bright self again, and throw off all these misgivings. You've just worked yourself out, and you ought to have taken a month's holiday down the coast. You would have come back as strong as a jack-rabbit and as chirpy as a little horned toad."

"Oh, I shall be all right," said Robert Strafford; "and you're such a brick, Ben. You've always been good to me. I've been such a sullen cur lately. But for all that——"

"But for all that, you're not a bad fellow at your best," said Ben, smiling; "and now come back with me. I can't have you mooning here by yourself to-night. Come back with me, and I'll cook you a splendid piece of steak, and I'll send you off in excellent form

to meet her ladyship to-morrow morning. Then whilst you are off on that errand, I'll turn in here and make the place as trim as a ship's cabin, and serve up a nice little dinner fit for a king and queen. Come on, old man. I half think there may be rain to-night."

"I must just water the horses," said Robert Strafford, "and then I'm ready for you."

The two friends sauntered down to the stables, the pointer Nellie following close upon their heels.

It was the hour of sunset, that hour when the barren scenery can hold its own for beauty with the loveliest land on earth. The lights changed and deepened, and faded away and gave place to other colours, until at last that tender rosy tint so dear to those who watch the Californian sky jewelled the mountains and the stones, holding everything, indeed, in a passing splendour.

"Her ladyship won't see anything like that in England," said Ben; and he stooped down and picked some wild flowers which were growing over the ranch—Mexican primroses and yellow violets.

"The ear-trumpet lady says this is going to be a splendid year for the wild flowers," he added; "so her ladyship will see California at its best. But I believe we are in for some rain. I rather wish it

would keep off until she has happily settled down in her new home."

"It won't rain yet," said Robert Strafford, leading out one of the horses to the water-trough. Then Ben fetched the other one out; but he broke loose and hurried up on the hill, and Ben followed after him, swearing in his usual patent manner in a gentle and musical monotone, as though he were reciting prayers kneeling by his mother's side. At last the horse was caught, and the chickens were fed, and Nellie was chained up to keep guard over the Californian estate. Then Robert mounted his little mare Jinny and said some words of comfort and apology to the pointer.

"Poor old Nellie, woman," he said; "I hate to leave you by yourself. But you must keep the house and ranch safe for your mistress. And I've given you an extra supply of bones. And we'll go hunting soon, old girl, I promise you."

Nellie went the full length of her chain and watched the two men canter off.

When she could no longer watch, she listened, every nerve intent; and when at last the sounds of the horses' hoofs had died away in the distance, she heaved a deep sigh, and after the manner of all philosophers, resigned herself to an extra supply of bones.

CHAPTER II.—HILDA COMES.

The next morning after Robert Strafford had gone off to town to meet Hilda, Ben Overleigh went to his friend's house and put everything in order, and then having paid special attention to the arrangement of his moustache, he set out to visit Miss Dewsbury,

the deaf lady, intending if possible to coax her piano out of her. He was a great favourite of hers, and he was indeed the only person who was not thoroughly frightened of her. She was quite seventy years of age, but she had unending strength and vitality, and worked

like a navy on her ranch, only employing a man when she absolutely must. And when she did employ any one, she mounted to the top of the house and kept watch over him with an opera-glass, so that she might be quite sure she was having the advantage of every moment of his time. The boys in the neighbourhood often refused to work for her,—for, as Jesse Holles said, it was bad enough to be watched through an opera-glass, but to have to put up with all her scoldings, and not be able to say a word of defence which could reach her, except through a trumpet—no, by Jove, that wasn't the job for him! And then there were other complaints against her; she never gave any one a decent meal, and she never dreamed of offering anything else but skimmed milk which people did not seem able to swallow; they swallowed the opera-glasses and the trumpet and the scoldings and the tough beef, but when it came to the skimmed milk, they felt that they had already endured enough. So the best people in the valley would not work for Miss Dewsbury—at least, not willingly; and it had sometimes happened that Ben Overleigh had used his powers of persuasion to induce some of the young fellows to give her a few days' help when she was in special need of it; and on more than one occasion, when he could not make any one else go to her, he had offered her his services himself. So she owed him some kindness, and moreover his courtliness and his gentle voice were pleasing to her. He was the only person, so she said, who did not shout down the trumpet. And yet she could hear every word he uttered.

This morning when he arrived at her house, she was vainly trying to hear what the butcher said, and the butcher was vainly trying to

make himself understood. She was in a state of feverish excitement, and the butcher looked in the last stage of nervous exhaustion.

"You've just come in time to save my life," he said to Ben. "For the love of heaven, tell her through the trumpet that beef has gone up two cents a pound, and that she can't have her salted tongue till next week, and that she has given me seven cents too little."

Then Ben of the magic voice spoke these mystic words through the trumpet, and the butcher went off comforted, and Miss Dewsbury smiled at her favourite; and when he told her that he had come to ask a special favour of her, she was so gracious that Ben felt he would have no difficulty in carrying out his project. But when she understood what he wanted, things did not go so easily. To be sure, she did not use the piano, she said, but then that was no reason why any one else should use it for her. Ben stood waiting patiently until she should have exhausted all her eloquence, and then he stooped down and quietly picked one or two suckers off a lemon-tree, and took his pruning-knife from his pocket and snipped off a faded branch, and then he twirled his great moustache, with quiet deliberation. That settled the matter.

"You may have the piano," she said, "but you must fetch it yourself."

Ben did not think it necessary to add that he had already arranged for it to be fetched at once, and he lingered a little while with her, listening to her complaint about the men she employed and about their laziness, which she observed through the opera-glass. Ben was just going to suggest that perhaps the opera-glass made the men lazy,

when he remembered that he must be circumspect, and so he contrived some beautiful speech about the immorality of laziness; he even asked for a glass of skimmed milk, and off he cantered, raising his hat and bowing chivalrously to the old lady rancher; and before very long her piano stood in Robert Strafford's little house, and Ben spent a long time in cleaning and dusting it.

After he had finished this task he became very restless, and finally went down to the workshop and made a rough letter-box, which he fixed on to a post and placed at the corner of the road leading up to his friend's ranch. Two hours were left. He did a little gardening and watered the tiny grass-plot. He looked at the sky. Blue-black clouds were hovering over the mountains, obscuring some and trying to envelop others.

"We are in for a storm," he said. "It is making straight for this part from Grevilles Mountain. But I hope it won't come to-night. It will be a poor welcome to Bob's wife, though it's about time now for the land to have a thorough good drenching."

He looked at the pretty valley with its belt of trees, seen at its best from the hill where Robert's house was built. At all times of the year there was that green stretch yonder of clustering trees, nestling near the foothills, which in their turn seemed to nestle up to the rugged mountains.

"Yes," he said, as he turned away, "those trees make one homesick for a wooded country. These wonderful ranges of mountains and these hills are all very well in their way, and one learns to love them tremendously, but one longs for the trees. And yet when Jesse Holles went north and came back again, he said he was glad to see the barren mountains once more. I

wonder what the girl will think of it all, and how she will take to the life. The women suffer miseries of home-sickness."

He stood thinking a while, and there was an expression of great sadness on his face.

"My own little sweetheart would have pined out here," he said, softly; "I can bear the loneliness, but I could not have borne that. Poor old Bob," he said, regretfully, "I almost wish he had not sent for her—it is such a risk in this land. I don't wonder he is anxious."

Then he glanced again at the threatening clouds, and went back to the house, took off his coat, turned up his sleeves, and began to make the preparations for the evening meal. He laid the cloth, changed the flowers several times before they smiled to his satisfaction, and polished the knives and forks. He brought in some logs of wood and some sumac-roots, made a fire, and blew it up with the bellows.

Suddenly the frail little frame-house was shaken by a heavy gust of wind; and when the shock had passed, every board creaked and quivered. Nellie got up from her warm place near the fire, and stalked about uneasily.

"Damnation," said Ben, "the storm is working up. If they'd only come before it is any worse."

It was now seven o'clock and pitch dark. Ben lit the lantern, and stationed himself outside with it. The time seemed endless to him, but at last he heard the music of wheels, and in a few minutes the horses dashed up the hill, and Robert's voice rang out lustily—

"Here she is, Ben."

"Yes, here I am" said Robert's wife.

"Just in time to escape the storm," said Ben, coming forward

to greet her, and helping her out of the buggy. "I've been awfully anxious about you both. I'll take the horse down to the barn, Bob, and then I'll fly up to see about the dinner. Leave everything to me."

So whilst Ben was unhitching the horse, Robert led his wife into the little house, and he was transfigured with pride and pleasure when she glanced round and said—

"Why, how cosy you've made it! And how cheerful the fire looks! And this dear dog ready to be so friendly. It looks like a real little home—doesn't it?"

In that one moment all Robert's doubts and misgivings were set at rest, and when Ben hurried up from the barn the husband and wife were kneeling down and toasting themselves before the fire, and the dog nestling up near them, and he heard Robert asking questions about the dear old country, and Hilda answering in a voice which struck on Ben's sensitive ear as being somewhat harsh and strident. He had only time to glance hastily at her as he passed into the kitchen, intent on serving up a dainty little dinner as quickly as possible; and at last he brought it in triumphantly, hot steak cooked as only Ben knew how, and fried potatoes and chicken salad, and the most fragrant coffee; and then overcome with his exertions and his anxiety and his day's working and waiting, he sank back in his chair with a sigh of relief and twirled his great moustaches.

"You have been such a good friend to Bob," said Hilda, smiling at him. "I know all about it."

"No, no," said Ben, with his easy grace, "I've only helped to get him through the time until you came out to him. The poor wretch needed cheering up. But

he does not look much like a poor wretch now."

"No, indeed," laughed Robert, "and I don't feel like one."

"You've often been a great anxiety to me," said Ben, turning to Hilda. "When the mails have been delayed and your letters have not come at their appointed minute, then I have had to suffer. And once you were ill. And then I wasn't allowed any peace of mind."

"In fact, you have had bad times on my account," she said, brightly.

"Well, I could not bear to see him suffer," Ben said, laying his arm on Robert's shoulder. "He is a terrible fellow at taking things to heart. There is no doing anything at all with him."

"He has suffered quite unnecessarily," Hilda answered, with that peculiar harsh ring in her voice which again jarred on Ben's sensitiveness. "I am one of the strong ones of the earth."

And she looked it. Though tired with the long journey from England, she had the appearance of being in excellent health. Her complexion was dark, and her eyes were brown, but without any softness in them. She was decidedly good-looking, almost beautiful indeed, and strikingly graceful of form and stature. But she impressed Ben as being quite unsympathetic, and all the time he was washing up the tea things and tidying the little kitchen he found himself harping on this note alone.

And when he had said good-bye to Robert and Hilda, and was hurrying home on his pretty little mare Fanny, he gave vent to his disappointed feelings in his usual musical fashion, and kept up a soft accompaniment of swearing to the howling of the wind.

CHAPTER III.—GROWING REGRETS.

It was now three days since Hilda's arrival, and the storm, which had been threatening for so long, had not yet broken loose. Like all the ranchers, Robert was anxious for a good deluge, but he was relieved that there was a little delay about it, for he wanted Hilda to enjoy a few days of outdoor life and see all he had to show her on the ranch and in the garden. He seemed like a different man now that she had come out to him; and every tiny mark of appreciation which she gave made him lift his head higher, and step more firmly over the ground. The labour, the anxiety, and the risk of his enterprise were all forgotten in the intense pride and pleasure with which he showed her what he had been doing to ensure success. He told her, with quiet confidence in the ultimate truth of his words, that his lemons could not possibly be a failure.

"You will hear many people say that there is no money in fruit-farming," he said to her when he was taking her over the ranch and pointing out to her his pet trees. "But you need not be concerned about that. The big ranches often fail because they are too unwieldy, and some of the small ranches fail because they are not properly looked after, and because their owners have not enough capital to spend money on them, and to wait patiently for a good return. But a ranch of twenty-five acres carefully tended in every particular cannot help being a success. Those are my best trees yonder. They are specially fine, and I expect to net two dollars a box on them next year. I can't tell you how much care I have given to them, but

you see for yourself that it was well worth while."

Hilda tried to make some appropriate remark, but the trees did not really arouse any interest in her: she was bitterly disappointed with them, for in spite of all Robert's letters telling her that the orchard was only in its infancy, she had expected to see great groves of trees covered with lemons and oranges. And until one learns to watch for oneself the quick growth, one may well feel disappointment and contempt. Some amusing criticisms with a spice of derision in them rose to her lips, but she managed to shut them off, and followed him silently up the trail which led to his reservoir, on which he set great store.

"Yes," he said, "this is a thoroughly satisfactory piece of work. It cost a good deal of money and labour, but it is splendidly strong, and it is such an advantage to be able to store water in this dry land."

Hilda praised the reservoir, and suggested they should grow some trees there.

"Yes, indeed," Robert said, eagerly, "we will have trees everywhere, and you shall choose them and settle where they are to be planted."

"Why didn't you plant some shade trees at once?" she asked. "The whole place is so terribly bare. I could not have believed that such a barren spot existed anywhere outside a desert."

Robert's face fell, and Hilda added quickly—

"But these are grand old mountains around us, and I daresay one gets accustomed to the bareness."

"Oh yes," he answered, "and in time one almost learns to think it beautiful."

"Beautiful, no," she replied, decidedly, "but perhaps tolerable."

"Every day," he said, almost pleadingly, "you will see a difference in the scenery. If we have some more rain, as we shall do shortly, you will see the green springing up everywhere. The most dried-up-looking corner will suddenly become jewelled with wild flowers. In about three weeks' time that little hill yonder above our ranch will be covered with scented yellow lilies. Down in the valley you will find green enough to satisfy the hungriest eye, and up on the mountains where you must go on horseback, the brushwood is coming on splendidly, and all sorts of lovely flowers and shrubs are springing up. And there you will have a grand view of the surrounding mountains, and the Pacific. You will even feel the sea-breeze, and at times you will hear the sound of the waves."

He paused for a moment, and Hilda said, brightly—

"I shall enjoy the riding immensely. Can I begin soon?"

"At once," he answered proudly again. "Come and make friends with Bessie, and see the side-saddle which I bought for you the other day. It's a Mexican one, and I think it is the safest for this country."

He had taken thought for her in every way, and she could not but notice it and be grateful for it; and as the days went on she grew more conscious of the evidences of his kindness, and all the more anxious to do her part exactly and conscientiously. She threw herself into work to which she had been totally unaccustomed all

her life, and for which she had no liking; but because she had a strong will and a satisfaction in doing everything well, she made astonishing progress, illustrating the truth sometimes disputed by ungenerous critics, that a good groundwork of culture and education helps one and does not hinder one in the practical and unpoetical things of life.

But nevertheless she recognised that she had made a great mistake; and looking back now she wondered why in the name of heaven she had ever come out to this distant land and got herself entangled in a life which could never be congenial to her; for once there, and having seen her surroundings and her limitations, she realised that it could never be attractive to her. She had loved Robert as well as she could love any one, and when his health broke down and he had to leave England, she continued her engagement as a matter of course, and his letters of love and longing were acceptable to her, not involving any strain on her part, nor any pressing need of arranging definitely for the future. So she drifted on, and when at last the question arose of her joining him, her relations and friends used every opposition to prevent her. It was pointed out to her that after a London life full of many interests and possibilities and actualities, ranching in Southern California would be simply madness. She had been accustomed to companions, men and women of a certain amount of culture and refinement. How would she manage, bereft of all these advantages? The strenuous opposition which she met with, and the solid arguments advanced against her leaving the old country, stimulated her desire to go, and a sudden

wave of loyalty and pity for that lonely rancher who was counting on her help and companionship, confirmed her in her intentions. She felt that if she had not been intending to keep her promise, she ought at least to have let him know the drift of her mind. This, and a very decided inclination for travel and adventures, settled the matter.

So she came.

And this afternoon, when she sat on the little verandah, resting after her housework, and watching Robert cultivating the eight-acre piece on the hill-slope, she realised that she had been mad. He paused for a moment and waved to her, and she waved back listlessly. She looked at the rich upturned soil, of chocolate brown, and the formal rows of lemon-trees; at the stretch of country all around her, with scarcely a sign of human habitation; at the great mountains, uncompromisingly stern and barren of everything except stone and brush. She watched the pointer Nellie going in front of the little grey team and encouraging them to do their work well, and now she glanced upwards and noticed the majestic flight of the turkey buzzards, and now she was attracted by the noise of a humming-bird who came to visit her fragrant honeysuckle creeper and then sped on his way. Everything seemed so still and lifeless. There were no familiar noises such as greet one in the tiniest village in the old country. There was no pulsation nor throb of life. There was nothing to stimulate,—nothing in the circumstances of everyday life, nor in the scenery. And with the exception of her husband, there was no one to speak to all through the living hours of the day.

And this was what she had chosen of her own freewill. She

had deliberately thrown up a life full of interests and distractions, and had been mad enough to exchange it for this.

She was fond of music, and would hear none.

She was fond of theatres, and she had cut herself off from them.

As for books—well, she could get them here; but meanwhile Meredith's 'Lord Ormont and his Aminta' lay unopened by her side, and the current number of the 'Century' was thrown down and carelessly crumpled. But as she stooped to pick it up, she was ashamed to think how ungrateful she was for all his kindness. He had filled a little book-shelf with new books for her, he had subscribed for several of the best magazines, he had sent for a tuner from town to tune the ear-trumpet lady's piano. She scarcely cared to read, and she had not touched the piano. A feeling of tenderness and gratitude came over her, and she sprang up and trudged over the fields to speak a few words with her husband. His face brightened when he saw her, and he gave her such a welcome. Nellie sprang up to greet her, and the horses looked round inquiringly. For the moment she felt really proud and happy.

"You must let me help you all I can," she said, gently. "I am so strong and able to do so much. You look dreadfully tired."

"Oh, that's nothing," he said, smiling, and wiping his forehead. "Everything seems different since you came."

"If you teach me, I can do the pruning," she said; "I believe I could cultivate too."

"I believe you could," he answered, "and perhaps you think too that I am going to allow you to dig the basins for the irrigating during the summer. But you shall

do the pruning, and next year, you know, there will be the curing of the lemons."

"*Next year*," she repeated, slowly, and her heart sank once more.

"I've half decided to plant some walnuts," he said. "They don't bear for about nine years, but then they are very profitable."

"*Nine years*," she echoed, and a throb of pain passed through her.

But at that moment Ben Overleigh came cantering over the ranch, with a rifle in front of him and some quail which he had just shot.

"This is my first offering of quail," he said, turning to Hilda, "and I've shot them with this pretty little rifle which Jesse Holles is sending as a present to you. He is too shy to give it to you himself. Though you won't think him shy when you see him."

"And when shall I see him?" asked Hilda, who had brightened up considerably and looked beautiful.

"This evening," answered Ben, glancing at her admiringly. "The fact is, I came to tell you that in about an hour's time you may expect seven callers. Lauderdale and Graham and Holles and some of the other boys intend to pay you their respects this evening. They fear lest they may be prevented later on by the storm which I've prophesied for the last fortnight, and which I shall continue to prophesy with unflinching persistence until it comes. You will find Holles most amusing if he is in good form. But he has been quite ill for the last three weeks, and is

only just himself again. He made nine wills and wrote six farewell letters in twenty-one days, and he said they helped him to recover. He looked in at my place this morning and asked for a tie, and Graham pleaded for a collar, and when I heard why they wanted these articles of luxury, I thought I had better come a little earlier and warn you, as seven visitors are rather a large bunch of grapes, even in California."

"Then we will go in and get ready for them," Hilda said, delighted at the prospect of company. "How nice of Mr Holles to send the rifle! Can't I fire a shot now, Mr Overleigh? I should so much like to try."

He showed her how to use it, and then loaded it for her, and nodded in approval to Robert when she took a steady aim at a mark they had placed for her and hit it.

"She'll do," said Ben, cheerily; "we can send her out to shoot the deer in the mountains, Bob. Perhaps she will have better luck than we do."

"Perhaps," laughed Robert, as he turned the horses homeward. "Be sure and ask Holles, Hilda, what is the greatest number of deer he has ever shot!"

Hilda promised not to forget, and hurried into the house to make her preparations for her guests.

"It will rain to-night," Ben said; "it can't help itself any longer. Just look yonder."

"Yes, I believe you are right at last," answered Robert, unhitching the horses from the cultivator.

CHAPTER IV.—THE STORM.

The seven callers came as threatened, and Hilda began to think that perhaps there was some kind

of companionship possible in the wilds of Southern California. She was delighted with these young

English fellows, and sat in the midst of them laughing at their fun, listening to their stories, and answering their eager questions about the dear old country for which they all longed.

"How does the Strand look?" asked Graham.

"Does Tottenham Court Road seem the same as ever?" asked Lauderdale.

"Has Park Lane changed at all?" asked Holles, putting on airs of great superiority. In spite of his recent illness, he was in capital spirits, and seemed to be much liked by his companions. "Yes, I've been quite ill," he said, in answer to Hilda's inquiries; "but Lauderdale nursed me beautifully, and made me drink about a dozen bottles of Elliman's embrocation, and then I got well enough to write several parting letters to my friends in England and to make my will. And that's a very puzzling thing to do satisfactorily when you have many valuable things to leave. I left my pipe first to Lauderdale, then to Graham, then to Bob, and then to Ben Overleigh, and finally I kept it for myself."

"You ought to have kept your rifle for yourself," Hilda said, graciously, "though I am glad you did not. I am delighted to have it from you, and hope to do it justice."

"A rifle is a very handy thing to have in this country," he answered. "One may want it at any moment for a coyote, or a jack-rabbit, or a Mexican."

"Or perhaps a deer," suggested Hilda, slyly.

They all laughed at that, and Jesse Holles as heartily as any one, and then Ben said he thought they ought to be starting home. It was evident that none of them wanted to go, and Holles, being personally fond of music, was

looking at the piano; but Ben seemed anxious about the weather, and insisted on their leaving at once with him. They called him the High Binder, explaining to Hilda the exact meaning of a High Binder, and his mysterious and subtle influence over his Chinese compatriots, whom he ruled with an iron rod.

"Just see how we all quail before him," said Holles, who had been talking incessantly the whole evening; "and no doubt you've observed how speechless we are in his presence. He has only to wag his pig-tail and we go flat on our faces at once."

"Don't be such a confounded ass," said Ben, laughing. "Come along, boys."

"All right, man alive," said Holles, "but at least let me finish this piece of cake first. We don't get cake like this at your place, Ben. Do you know, Mrs Strafford, when we want to kill coyotes, we get Ben to make us some of his best sponge-rusks. That does the trick at once."

"Why don't you give them to the deer also," suggested Hilda, mischievously, and then there was a shout of laughter at this, and Robert lit the lantern and opened the door.

"It's raining, boys," he said; "and what's more, it is coming on harder."

"Hurrah for California!" sang out Graham; "we shall all make our fortunes."

"Yes," said Robert Strafford, "we shall all be saved if the country gets a thorough good drenching. But you will be pretty well sprinkled by the time you reach home."

"Never mind," replied Holles, cheerily. "I'm the only delicate one, you know, and the others won't take much harm, being of

coarser fabric. And I have nothing on to spoil except the High Binder's tie, which I will put in my pocket. So good-night, Mrs Strafford, and three cheers for yourself and Bob and dear old England."

The High Binder and the seven other callers gave three ringing cheers and cantered off to their homes. Long before they reached their destinations the storm broke forth with unbridled fury. The rain poured down in torrents, gaining in force and rage every moment. The wind suddenly rose, and all but swept away the riders and their horses, and shook to its very foundation the frail little frame-house where Robert and Hilda were watching by the log-fire, listening to the cracking and creaking and groaning of the boards. The wind rose higher and higher. It seemed as though the little house must assuredly be caught up and hurled headlong. Now and then Nellie got up and howled, and Hilda started nervously.

"It's all right," Robert said, reassuringly. "The wind will soon drop, and as for the rain, we have wanted it badly. We should all have been ruined this year if the wet season had not set in. It's all right, Nell. Lie down, old girl."

But the wind did not drop. Hour after hour it raged and threatened, and together with the tremendous downpouring of the rain, and the rushing of the water in streams over the ground, made a deafening tumult.

"I wish we had kept those boys," Robert said once or twice. "It is not fit for any one to be out on such a night. When these storms come," he added, "I always feel so thankful that Ben urged me to try land on the hill-slopes

rather than in the valley. Three years ago there was fearful damage done in the valley. One of the ranchers had eight acres of olives completely ruined by the floods from the river. You must see the river to-morrow. You saw it yesterday, didn't you. Well, you will not recognise it after a day or two if the rain continues. And from the verandah you will hear it roaring like the ocean."

Later on he said—

"I rather wish I hadn't filled up my reservoir so full with flume-water. It never struck me to make allowances for the rain coming, idiot that I am. But there is a good deal of seepage going on, and I thought I might as well fill it up to just below the overflow."

"You are not anxious about it?" she asked, kindly.

"No; no," he said, cheerfully; "but I shall go out early to-morrow morning and raise the flood-gate, just to be well on the safe side. One can't be too careful about reservoirs. They are the very devil if the dam bursts. But mine is as solid as a fortress. I'd stake my life on that. I worked like ten navvies over that earth dam. I used to feel rather like that man in Victor Hugo's 'Toilers of the Sea.' Do you remember how he slaved over his self-imposed task?"

"Poor old Bob," she said, bending over him, and speaking in a gentler voice than was her wont, "and you are not in the least fit for such hard work. I believe you have worn yourself out; and all for me, and I, if you only knew, so little worthy of it."

"I wanted our little ranch to be just as compact as possible," he said, "so that I might offer to you the best I could in this distant land. As for myself, I am perfectly well, now you've come out

to me: only I am always wishing that I could have made a home for you in the old country. I never forget it whatever I am doing."

He seemed to be waiting for an answer, but Hilda was silent, and when at last she spoke, it was about her seven callers, and the next moment there was a terrible blast of wind, and the door was blown in and hurled with a crash to the ground. After that, their whole attention was taken up in trying to keep out the rain and in securing the windows, and at last, worn out with their long watch, they slept.

Hilda dreamed of England, and of everything she had left there. And she dreamed that she heard Robert saying, "*And next year there will be the lemons to be cured.*" "*Next year,*" she answered, and her heart sank.

Robert dreamed of the eight acres of olives ruined by the floods three years ago, and of his own ranch situated so safely on the hill-slope, and of his reservoir. He dreamed he was still working at it, still strengthening the earth dam, and still scraping out the cañon so as to have room for about five hundred thousand gallons of water.

"*It's nearly done,*" he said; "*about three weeks more and then I'm through with it.*"

At six o'clock he woke up with a start, and found the storm unabated in strength and fury. Then once more he remembered about his reservoir, and seized with a sudden panic, he flung out of the house, and fighting his way through the rain and wind, crossed the ranch and tore up the trail which led to the reservoir.

For one second he stood paralysed.

The water was just beginning to

flow over the earth dam. He had come too late, and he knew it. He lifted a piece of iron piping which lay there at hand, and he tried to knock out the flood-gate, but the mischief was done. In less than ten minutes the water had cut a hole five feet deep in the dam, and was rushing down the ranch, carving for itself a gully which widened and deepened every second.

In the blinding rain and wind Robert Strafford stood helpless and watched the whole of the dam give way: he watched the water tearing madly over the best part of his ranch: he saw numbers of his choicest lemon-trees rooted up and borne away: he saw the labour of weeks and months flung, as it were, in his face. And he was helpless. It was all over in half an hour, and still he lingered there, as though rooted to the spot,—drenched by the rain and blown by the wind, and unconscious of everything except this bitter disappointment. And then when his mind began to work again, he thought of Hilda: how it was through him that she had left her home and her surroundings and all her many interests, and had come to him to this far-off country, to this loveless land, to this starved region—yes, to this starved region, where people were longing and pining for even a passing throb of the old life, for even a glance at a Devonshire lane or a Surrey hill; for some old familiar scene of beauty or some former sensation of mental or artistic satisfaction; for something—no matter what—but just something from the old country which would feel like the touch of a loved hand on a bowed head. He was holding out his arms, and his heart and whole being were leaping towards the blessed land which had nurtured him: even as

tiny children cry out for their mother, and can be comforted and satisfied by her alone. Ah, his thoughts of and his desires for his old home had broken down the barrier of control, and were tearing idly onwards like that raging torrent yonder. And the more he desired it and thought of it, all the more bitterly did he reproach himself for taking Hilda away from it, for urging her to come and cut herself off from the things most worth having in life—and *for what?* To share his exile, and his loneliness, and his failure. That was all he had to offer her, and he might have known it from

the beginning, and if he could not save himself, at least he might have spared her.

At last he turned away suddenly, and, battling with the storm, made his way home. Hilda ran out to meet him.

"Robert," she said, seeing his pale face, "I've been so anxious—what has happened?—what is the matter?"

"Do you hear that noise?" he said, excitedly; "do you hear the roar of that torrent? It is our reservoir let loose over our ranch. How do you like having married a man who has failed in everything?"

CHAPTER V.—DOWN BY THE RIVER.

All through that most miserable day Hilda gave him the best of her sympathy and kindness; but even her best was poor of quality and scant of quantity, and it did not avail to rouse him from his despair. She was too new to California life to understand the whole meaning of the morning's misfortune, and apart from this, her power of comforting lacked the glow and warmth of passionate attachment. Still, she gave to her uttermost farthing, but nothing she could do or say had the effect of helping him. He crouched by the fire, a broken man seemingly, now and again piling on the sumac-roots, and sometimes glancing at her as she passed to and fro busy with the affairs of their little household. She served the mid-day meal and urged him to break his fast, but he shook his head, and drew nearer to the fire. At about three o'clock there was a lull in the storm, and the rain ceased.

Hilda, who was feeling utterly wretched and perplexed, went out

to the verandah and listened to the roar of the river, and saw a silver streak in the valley which two days before had been perfectly dry. She had laughed when she was told that the sandy waste yonder was the great river. Now, looking at it, she was seized with a strong desire to go down and stand near it, and she was just debating in her mind whether she could leave Robert, and whether she could get through the day without some kind of distraction,—no matter what, but something to brace her up a little,—when she saw a figure coming up the hill, and at once recognised Ben Overleigh. A strong feeling of relief and hope took possession of her. Ben would stay with Robert whilst she went out and saw what there was to be seen, and then she would come back refreshed in mind and body. He would know how to comfort Robert, and as for herself, she was quite conscious that she brightened up in his presence, and felt less hopeless too about this lonely ranch life when

she remembered that he was a neighbour and their friend.

"Well," he said, greeting her, "and so you've seen a typical Californian rain-storm. I tell you, you are lucky to be on the hill. I shouldn't wonder if there was a great deal of damage done in the valley. And the storm is not over yet. This is only a lull, but I thought I would just come over to see how things have been going with you. Where is Bob?"

"Bob is inside crouching over the fire," she said.

"He should take you down to see the river," Ben said. "It is a tremendous sight."

"I half thought of going by myself," she said, gloomily, "if only for the sake of a little distraction. Bob is in trouble; we are both in trouble. The reservoir burst this morning."

"Good heavens!" said Ben, "and you talk of it as though your bandbox had burst, and that was all."

She darted an indignant glance at him as he opened the door hastily and went into the house. He laid his hands heavily on Bob's shoulders and said, "Cheer up, old man. I've come to smoke a pipe with you."

"Ben, old fellow," Robert Strafford said, looking up, and feeling the comfort of his presence at once.

There was no talk between them: they sat together by the fireside, whilst Hilda lingered outside on the verandah.

At last Robert spoke.

"My best trees are gone," he said, half-dreamily; "the best part of my ranch is ruined."

"We'll redeem it," Ben answered, "you and I together."

Robert shook his head.

"There's no redeeming it," he said, quietly; "I've made another failure of my life, and dragged the

girl into it this time. And I can't forgive myself. And she has been so good and patient all through this wretched day. She has not come out to anything very gay, has she?"

In the moment Ben's thoughts turned sympathetically to Hilda, and he regretted his hasty words. No; Bob was right: she had not come out to anything very gay: a barren life, a worn-out worker, and a ruined ranch, — not a particularly sumptuous marriage portion for any one.

"I think I shall take her down to the river," he said, suddenly. "She half wanted to go, and it is not safe for her alone."

Robert nodded as though in approval, and showed no further interest in outside things. Ben saw that he was best alone, and slipped out quietly, having asked no questions about the reservoir. But he soon saw for himself that the finest part of Robert's ranch was a scene of desolation, and his heart ached for his friend. Then he came round to the honeysuckle verandah and saw Hilda still standing there. She looked utterly listless and depressed.

"May I take you down to the river?" he asked, in his own kind way. "Bob is best alone, and the walk will do you good. Put on some thick boots, for the mud is something awful. You don't mind heavy walking?"

"No, indeed," she answered, eagerly; "I shall be glad to come."

In a few minutes they were making their way down to the valley, now sticking in the mud, and now going valiantly onwards without interruption. At first Ben could not bring himself to speak of the trouble which had befallen his friend; he felt as though Hilda did not understand, or as though she did not care. And yet it was im-

possible that she did not care. No, she was, so he argued, probably one of those reserved characters who keep their emotions in an iron safe, proof against all attacks. But at last he could no longer keep silent on the subject which was uppermost in his thoughts.

"It is a most disastrous affair, this bursting of the reservoir," he said. "Bob slaved like a nigger at that earth dam. I never saw any fellow work so hard. And there never was a doubt in our minds about it being as firm as a rock. He has not told me a word about it yet, and I did not like to ask. He will tell me in his own time."

"He had filled the reservoir too full," Hilda said, in her grating voice. "I can't imagine why he did such a ridiculous thing when he knew the rain was coming. And then there was some trouble about the flood-gate. It wouldn't act properly. That is how it has occurred—at least so he told me. Day after day he put off looking after that flood-gate until it was too late. I am dreadfully sorry about it all, but I can't think why he did not take proper precautions. I would not say that to him, of course, but it seems to me that it might have been prevented if——"

"If Bob had not been utterly worn out," said Ben, brusquely.

"Well, it is altogether most unfortunate," she said, indifferently.

Ben glanced at her keenly, scarcely knowing how to control his indignation at her cold criticism of his friend. He was trying to make out what manner of woman she really was, trying to divine what kind of heart she had, and what degree of intelligence; for she apparently did not realise the seriousness of the disaster, and talked of it as though it were something outside her, in the

consequences of which she had no part.

"I scarcely think this is the moment for criticism," he said, suddenly; "it is the moment for generous sympathy. Bob will need everything we can give him of help and kindness."

"Do you suppose I don't know that?" she asked, coldly. "Do you imagine that I am intending to make things harder for him? What do you suppose I am?"

"I suppose you are what you are," Ben answered, in his quiet deliberate way—"a new-comer to California ignorant of our lives out here, our struggles, our weeks and months and years of unaccustomed toil, and our great anxieties, and our great disasters. Your ranch is practically ruined. All those trees would have borne splendid lemons next year. Bob has tended them with special care. Now they are swept away. The part of your ranch which is left uninjured by the bursting of the reservoir is the newly planted part. About two or three months ago I myself helped Bob to put in the trees. And now he will have to begin all over again. And it is just crushing."

He paused for a moment, and even in the midst of his exasperation at her indifference, and in spite of his sympathy with Bob, he felt a rush of kindly feeling towards her. There she was amongst them in a foreign land, with none of her own people and none of her former interests,—no, she had not come out to anything very cheerful: and at twenty-four, and three weeks married, one has a right to expect some satisfaction out of life.

"But I am not a very gay companion," he said, with sudden cheeriness. "You have had enough sadness for one day, and here am I

doing my level best to add to it. Holles always says that if I had chosen, I could have written an admirable Book of Lamentations."

"He is a most amusing boy," Hilda said, smiling, in spite of herself.

"One day when he is in good form you must make him tell you his adventures on a fishing expedition," said Ben. "And some day you must ask him about his famous quarrel with the ear-trumpet lady—your only neighbour. He does just what he likes with us all, and we're ridiculously fond of him. That is his place right over there, across the river. And now what do you think of the river? Stay, let me go first and test the way across the meadows, and you must follow exactly in my footsteps, and we will get up to the very bank of the torrent. Don't choose your own path. The ground is fearfully soft, and you may be mired if you're not careful. Would you rather not go?"

"Indeed not," she said, eagerly; "I am ready for anything."

She had forgotten all her troubles and depression, and, buoyant with vitality and eagerness, followed after him, calling out sometimes when he looked back, "I'm all right, Mr Overleigh."

At last they stood together by the side of the river, and were able to see the wholesale destruction which the storm had wrought. Three days ago there had been no water in the river; now there was a raging torrent which was cutting down the banks, tearing up the trees, and bearing them away in fierce triumph.

First the topmost branches of a fine sycamore shuddered slightly; then they trembled, and those who were watching them knew that the tree was doomed. Then the roots cracked and groaned, and

something snapped. And the tree fell. Perhaps there was a moment of resistance even then—but all in vain. The torrent rushed on its victim with redoubled fury, and whirled it away.

There is a sad fascination in watching such a scene as this. You feel you must wait to see whether that tree yonder will be spared. You do not think it possible that it too will yield to the enemy. The others went, but they were fragile and unstable. This one surely will have the strength to withstand all attacks. You watch, and you turn away perhaps to see the bank a few yards farther down cave in and disappear; or it may be that you yourself have to step back and save yourself from slipping down with the ground which has given way. You hear a crash—and there is your tree fallen. You feel like holding out your arms to help a friend. You feel the despair of knowing that you cannot help. The torrent seizes your tree, attacks it with overwhelming force, and sweeps it onwards, onwards. And you linger there, remembering sadly that there is one tree less in a barren land, where every green branch is dearly prized; one tree less in that belt of green in the valley, so soothing and restful to the eye through all the months of the year.

Hilda could not leave the spot. She was so excited and interested, and so concerned at seeing the trees rooted up, that Ben began to wonder whether he would ever get her home again; and indeed every moment something fresh was occurring to attract their attention. Now a window and now a door tore past, and now a great olive-tree, and now a pig, and now a pump.

"We must be starting for home," he said at last. "The storm will

be coming on again. Do you see those threatening clouds yonder? My word, there has been a tremendous deal of damage done already, and we've not finished with it yet. I hope to goodness none of those boys have suffered. Their land lies so low, and this river is cutting away the country right and left."

She turned to him with sudden eagerness.

"It's tremendously exciting," she said, clasping her hands over her head and drawing a long breath. "If you have not seen anything of the kind before, it works you up to a terrible pitch. I don't know exactly what it makes one feel like: one does not think of oneself or one's own concerns—one just watches and wonders."

"Come," he said, looking at her with fresh interest, for her eagerness and animation were giving an added charm to her personality. "Come, before we are caught by the rain. Robert will be anxious."

"Robert will be anxious," she echoed, dreamily, and at once the brightness faded from her face. It was as though some sudden remembrance had quenched her vitality and her interest. She followed Ben over the meadows, and when they had gained the road safely she glanced at the scene they had left and then turned slowly homewards. There was something in her manner which forbade conversation, and Ben walked by her side, twirling his great moustaches, and wondering how things would eventually work themselves out between Robert and herself. His own feelings towards her this afternoon were a curious mixture of resentment and attraction. He was almost angry with himself for being attracted towards her, but he could not help admiring her

face and her strength and her whole bearing. She stalked by his side like a young panther. She was as strong as he was—stronger perhaps—and with more vitality in her little finger than poor old Bob in his whole tired body.

At last she spoke.

"Mr Overleigh," she said, "you and Robert have been great friends together for a long time now?"

"Why, yes," he answered, brightly. "This is the land of friendships, you know."

"I am glad to hear it is the land of something beautiful," she said, bitterly.

"Does it frown to you so very much?" he asked, kindly.

"Yes," she answered, almost fiercely. "Terribly."

"But if we have a beautiful spring, you will think differently of it," he said.

"No, no," she replied, standing still for the moment; "nothing could make me like it. It isn't only the scenery—it's everything: the isolation, the fearful distance from home, the absence of stimulus. One doesn't realise this at home. If one only realised it one wouldn't come. Nothing would make one come," she continued, excitedly—"neither love nor friendship, nor duty nor regret; and as for ambition to carve out a new career for oneself—good heavens! if I were a man I would rather starve in my old career."

Her thoughts, till now locked in her heart, were leaping into freedom.

"Oh," she said, "if you only knew what a relief it is to me to speak out to some one. I have been suffocated these last days, and every hour it has been getting worse. I've written letters—oh, yes, I've written letters and torn them up in despair. The distance is so great it paralyses one. You can't

send a chronicle of misery six thousand miles. It's just absurd mockery to do it. It's only a caricature of your depression. It helps you a little to write it, and then you must tear it up at once, and that's all the comfort you will have out of it. Oh, it is better than nothing—anything is better than nothing, when one has to keep silent, and when some one near you is watching constantly for your look of approval and watching for your word of approbation, and you can't give either—the only thing you can do is to be silent. But when you are able to speak out your real thoughts to a human being, then you breathe again, as I'm breathing now."

She paused, and Ben was silent too. He did not know what to say.

"But why, why do people come here?" she continued; "what do they find here to like? What do they get in exchange for all they've lost? Why, in the name of heaven, did Robert settle in such a place?—why did you choose to come here? Are you going to stay here all your lives? Tell me what it all means—tell me frankly and honestly whether you care for your life here, and whether you would not throw it up to-morrow if you could."

"I will tell you what it all means," said Ben, slowly; "it means that it's a land and a life for men, and not for women. We men gain in every particular: no more small clerkships for us—no more imprisonment in airless offices; but out-of-door freedom, and our own lives to ourselves and our own land. That's what it all means to us. To you women—well——"

"Well?" she said, impatiently.

"To you women it is altogether something different," he continued, "and unless you all know how to

love desperately, there's nothing to redeem the life out here for you."

She laughed bitterly.

"No, apparently nothing," she said. "So here, as everywhere, the women come off the worst."

"It seems to be so," he answered, reluctantly.

"Unless we can manage to love desperately," she said, in bitter scorn, "and then even Southern California can become a paradise to us. Is that what you think?"

"I think that love and friendship can make things easier, even in a lonely ranch in Southern California," Ben replied.

"The men are to have eternal freedom from airless offices and small clerkships, and to enjoy out-of-door lives, and revel in the possession of their ranches," Hilda continued; "and the women are to do work to which they have never been accustomed at home, are to drudge and drudge day after day in an isolated place without a soul to talk to, and their only compensation is to love desperately. A pretty picture indeed! Oh well, it is folly of me to talk of it, perfect folly, and to you of all people, Bob's friend."

"Better to Bob's friend than to Bob himself," Ben said, quietly.

She glanced up at him. There was something so soft in his voice whenever he spoke of Robert. Hilda was touched.

"You are anxious on Robert's behalf?" she said.

"Yes," he answered, simply, "I am."

They walked on in silence for a few minutes.

"You see, we have been such close friends," he said, "and I nursed him through a bad illness, and learned to look upon him as my own property. He came into my life, too, at a time when I was desolate. The world seemed

a desert to me. But Bob held out his hand and helped me along to a green place. I've found many green places since then."

"With such a close friendship as that, you must surely resent my presence out here," Hilda said, tentatively.

"Yes," he said, staunchly, "I resent it most deeply, if you do not make him happy."

Hilda smiled. She liked his candour: she liked everything about him.

They had reached the road which led up to her house.

"Good-bye," he said; "I won't come in just now. I must make

my way back whilst it is still fine. Tell Bob I'll be in to-morrow."

She stood watching him for a moment, and then she went home.

As she opened the door, her husband came forward to greet her, with a smile of love and welcome on his face. Everything was ready for her: the cloth was laid, the food was cooked, the kettle was boiling, there were fresh flowers on the table.

"Oh, Robert," she said, warmly, "and you've done everything for me, and you so tired with the day's trouble."

"Hush," he said, smiling sadly, "the day's trouble is past."

CHAPTER VI.—ATTRACTION AND REPULSION.

There were three days more of incessant rain and wind, and then the storm ceased, and the sun shone brightly. On the morning of the second fine day a waggon drove up to Hilda's house, and Holles got off, leaving Ben in charge of the horses.

"We called in to see if we could do anything for you in the village," he said, when Hilda opened the door to him.

"I should be ever so much obliged if you would bring me a sack of flour," she said; "I have just come to the end of my supply. Robert did not want to send our horses in yet. He says the roads are not safe."

"No, I don't suppose they are," said Holles. "But if you had been living on preserved pine-apples and empty coal-oil tins for the last week or ten days, you would be willing to risk a good deal for the sake of some flour or a piece of Porter House steak. We fellows over the river have been starving. Empty coal-oil tins and preserved pine-apples are not very fattening,

are they? But there, I mustn't grumble. We managed to get over to Ben one day, and he gave us one of his skinniest fowls in exchange for a large jar of my best marmalade. There was nothing on the fowl: but there never is anything on Ben's fowls, so we weren't disappointed. Only for goodness sake don't tell that to him. He's awfully touchy on the subject!"

Hilda laughed, and asked about the damages done by the storm on the other side of the river.

"Graham has come off very badly," Holles answered. "His house was taken clean away, and three acres of his best olives are completely ruined. We have some fearful cuts on our land, and the poor devil of a Chinaman who had his kitchen-garden half a mile away from our place has lost everything—cabbages, asparagus, pigtail, and all. Graham is living with us just now, and he says he must have something to eat to keep up his spirits. So I said I'd risk my valuable life for the good of the whole community. The

waggon and horses are Ben's. After I got across the river, I went and stormed at him until he hitched up. He did not want to come with me, and began swearing at me in that poetical fashion of his until I referred casually to the skinny fowls raised on his ranch, and then he said: 'Hold hard, Jesse, I'll come with you.' So we are off together, and if you don't hear anything more of us, you will know that we have found a muddy grave!"

"Good-bye," Hilda said. "I hope you will come safely back, bringing my flour and the mail. And some day I want you to tell me about your experiences with the ear-trumpet lady."

"All right," sang out Holles, cheerily. "And now good-bye."

He stood for a moment looking down like a shy boy.

"We fellows are all so sorry about the reservoir," he said, kindly. "If there is anything we can do to help old Bob, we're all ready and willing."

He was off quickly after that, and Hilda watched him jump into the waggon and take possession of the reins. Then he cracked the big black snake and started away in grand style.

"Confound you, Holles!" Ben said, as they rattled over the roads. "Do drive carefully. You will be landing us in one of those holes; I'll take the lines. I don't want the waggon smashed up and the horses lamed."

"I'm sorry, old man," Holles replied, cheerfully. "I'll promise to be careful, but I cannot possibly let you drive. I always feel like going to my own funeral when you handle the whip. Here, get up, boys. Don't be frightened of the mud. We're not going to stick yet. Get up, boys! But, by Jove, Ben, the roads are heavy."

"They are not fit for travelling yet," Ben answered. "But you worried me into coming. It's better to give in to you and have peace."

"Grumble away as much as you like," Holles answered; "I would rather have any amount of your grumbings than one of your fowls. What on earth do you do to your fowls to turn them out so thin? You might make your fortune by exhibiting them. They're quite unique!"

"Don't chatter so much, and look out where you are going," said Ben, pretending not to notice Jesse's chaff.

Holles laughed, and drove on silently for a few minutes. Then he said—

"That's a bad piece of luck about Bob Strafford's reservoir. Poor fellow! He will take it dreadfully to heart. And I am sorry for her too. It must be lonely for her in this part of the country."

Ben made no answer.

"I can't for the life of me understand about women," Holles continued. "If I were a fine girl like that, nothing on earth would induce me to come out to this kind of life. Any one can see that she is out of place here."

"The women have a bad time of it in a new country," Ben said, slowly. "If you talk to any one of them, it is nearly always the same story, home-sickness and desolation, desolation and home-sickness. I remember last year up north meeting such a handsome woman. Her husband had made quite a good thing out of Lima beans, and they had everything they wanted. But she told me that she did not know how to live through the first ten years of home-sickness."

"That's a cheerful prospect for Mrs Strafford," said Holles.

"She will probably work her way through, as they all do," answered Ben. "Women are wonderful creatures."

"You always have something to say for women," said Holles. "You ought to go back to the old country and help them get the suffrage and all that sort of thing. You are lost to them out here. How my maiden aunt, who only lives for the cause, as she calls it, would adore you!"

Ben smiled, and then said, quietly—

"Robert's ranch has been put back at least three years. I don't suppose Mrs Strafford realises that yet. But it is very hard on her, and cruel for him. He has worked untiringly, poor chap, and used every means in his power to reach success. Well, I simply can't speak of it, Jesse. It chokes me. Look out now. There's something ahead. Don't go an inch out of the road, or we shall get mired."

As they came nearer they saw that a cart, heavily laden with large bales of hay, had stuck in the mud. Two men were leading the horses away.

"Can we pass?" Ben asked of them.

"There's just enough room to manage it," one of them answered.

"We'll try for it," said Holles.

"Get up, boys!"

They might have been able to creep past in safety, but that one of the team shied at the bales of hay, and swerved about three feet from the road. In an instant the horses were plunging in the mud, and the spring-waggon had sunk up to the hubs. Ben took the black snake and whipped up the poor brutes, and, together with Holles, shouted, coaxed, and swore.

But they had gone down so deep that they could not free themselves. They plunged and

paddled and struggled hard to drag out the waggon, until at last one of them, more faint-hearted than the other, gave up trying and began nibbling the grass.

Ben and Holles jumped down, and walked very gingerly over the soft ground, which in the neighbourhood of the horses' hoofs was precisely like pea-soup. They unhitched the animals, who then sprang forward and gained firm footing once more. There they stood tired and panting, their long tails looking like house-painter's brushes steeped in rich brown colouring.

"I won't be worried again into bringing my team out so soon after a storm," said Ben, half humorously, as he stroked both the horses. "They don't care about a mud bath."

"It won't hurt them," answered Holles. "In fact it is a capital thing for the health. My maiden aunt used to go every year to Karlsbad for the mud baths, and after the tenth season she really began to feel the benefit of them. All the same, Ben, I'm glad we had not to dig out the horses. That is the very devil. Now for the waggon. I have a brilliant idea."

He saw a rope in the hay cart, and at once possessed himself of it. He fastened it to the pole of their own waggon and attached it to the horses. Then once more Ben cracked the black snake, and the horses, being now on solid ground, tugged and tugged, and at last pulled out the waggon.

"You ought to thank your stars you had me with you," said Holles, as they started on their way again. "I'm so wonderfully ingenious."

He drove into the village in grand style, much elated that he and Ben had come off so easily.

A great many men were gathered together at the grocery-store which was also the post-office, and horses and buggies of every description were crowding the road: most of the horses looked as though they had been mired, and several of them wore an air of depression born of wounded pride. Others obviously did not care whether or not their appearance was changed for the worse, and received with stolid indifference the various uncomplimentary remarks bestowed on their tails.

This was the first time of meeting since the great storm, and every one had something to tell about his own experiences. There was anxiety expressed about the enormous earth dam of the Nagales reservoir which supplied the Flume. If it had burst, as some one reported, untold-of damage would have been done; and moreover, the whole water-supply for the summer months' irrigating would have been wasted. This was a terrible prospect, and especially so after a long drought of exceptional severity. But the postmaster, who was busy distributing the accumulation of several days' mail, said there was no truth in the report.

"I wish there was no truth in the news about poor old Strafford's dam," said some one. "Can't you contradict it, Overleigh?"

Ben shook his head.

"It is only too true," he said, sorrowfully.

"Well, it's a miserable thing to happen, and so soon after his marriage," said the post-master. "Are you taking his mail, Mr Holles?"

"Yes," answered Holles. "Great powers! is this cart-load for him? Oh, I see, it's mostly for his wife. What a stunning lot of papers! By Jove! I wish my people would

send me some. The only thing I ever get from the old country is 'The Young Christian at Home.' And Lauderdale gets 'The Christian Household.' No wonder we're always depressed. Here, stay a moment, Ben. I'm not through with the shopping. I've nearly forgotten Mrs Strafford's sack of flour. And I want a tin of oysters. Graham is so upset about losing his three acres of olives that he says the only possible thing to help him is boiled oysters on toast. Well now, I'm about ready."

With a greeting here and a nod there, the two friends drove off. Ben took the reins, and Holles sorted the mail, and seemed greatly interested in the outsides of Mrs Strafford's newspapers and magazines, and in their insides too, for he held each one up to the light, looking through it as though through a telescope.

"Well, I wish they were for me," he said, as he pushed them away and lit his pipe. "But I don't grudge them to her. I dare say she is terribly home-sick for old England: and the mail will cheer her up. Somehow or other I feel sorry for her—don't you, Ben? What do you think of her?"

"I don't know," said Ben, slowly.

And he spoke the truth. He had thought of her constantly ever since his long walk and talk with her. He recalled her fierce distress, her sudden breaking down of the barrier of reserve, her cry of relief at being able to speak openly about the isolation and unattractiveness of the life and land. He remembered every word she had said—he remembered every gesture. In turning the whole matter over in his mind, he was torn by several conflicting feelings: sympathy with her suffering, indigna-

tion with himself for being able to sympathise at all with her, resentment against her for her cold criticism of Robert in the very midst of his distress, a growing suspicion that her nature had nothing to offer of tender love and passionate devotion, and an uneasy consciousness that in spite of all this, and in spite of his loyal and long attachment to poor old Bob, there was something about her personality which attracted him immensely—something gallant in her bearing, and something irresistible in her appearance. He could not but admire her, and he hated himself for it.

He did not listen to Jesse Holles's chatter, and he looked with indifference at the country smiling now in serene sunshine, and at the softened lights on the mountains. Holles tried to draw his attention to a few blades of grass springing up on the roadside, and as they neared Robert's house he glanced down into the valley and exclaimed with delight when he saw the river glistening like gold. But

Ben, usually so susceptible to the beauties of nature, and so enthusiastic about the varying charms of this wild expanse of scenery which he greatly loved, noticed nothing.

Then the sound of a harsh voice recalled him from his musings, and there stood Hilda.

"So you are back safely," she said, brightly.

"Yes," said Holles, as he handed out her letters and papers. "We were badly mired going; but the marvel is that we did not sink up to our very eyes coming back. Your mail is so heavy! But, oh, how I envy it! How I should enjoy those papers! This is not a hint. It is merely an emotional observation, which I regret already."

"You need not regret it," laughed Hilda. "I hope you will all read my papers."

"We'll try," said Holles, quaintly. "And here is the sack of flour. I will just lift it into the house. It is a perfectly lovely day. Spring has come!"

(To be concluded.)

A HEROINE OF THE RENAISSANCE.

IN the Capella Feo of SS. Biagio and Girolamo at Forli is a fine fresco, painted by the great native artist Melozzo degli Ambrosoli. The picture, crowded with figures, represents the miracle wrought by St James of Compostella, when he recalled into life some hens and hares that were already roasted for the table at which he sat eating. As witnesses of this miracle, after the quaint fashion of the century, are represented, kneeling, Girolamo Riario, the elderly nephew of Pope Sixtus IV., and his wife Caterina Sforza. Bending over her, as though to ask an explanation of the wonder, is their eldest son, who resembles his mother—a fine curly-headed lad; while behind her, in the haughty pride of virile manhood, leans carelessly against a pillar Giacomo Feo, the hotly loved second husband of Caterina, to whose memory this picture was painted by her order after his cruel murder. Caterina is clad in the modest garb of a pilgrim, with staff and shoon; her head is swathed, so that we merely see her profile. But what a head is this! What splendid energy in the large piercing eye, the small well-cut mouth, the strongly developed chin! How beautiful was this woman, even in the early thirties, when this portrait was limned! How much more beautiful must she have been when young! No wonder that, gifted with every good gift of fate, fortune, beauty, intelligence, she turned the heads of her contemporaries, was known as *la prima donna d'Italia*, and has left her mark for all time. Moreover, was she not the ancestress of all the Medicean Grand Dukes

of Tuscany, and hence of all the Bourbons from Louis XIII. downward? It is not surprising that such a figure has tempted many a biographer's hand; but it has been reserved for a modern Italian to do full justice to this remarkable woman, and he has raised to her memory a monumental work that leaves no room for a future word to be said on the subject. In fulfilling this pious act in favour of a lady often maligned, much misunderstood, Count Pasolini almost effects a work of expiation. It would seem that when the great family of Sforza was as yet but named Attendoli, inhabiting Cotignola,—a hamlet that lies betwixt Ravenna and Castel Bolognese,—there arose at the end of the fourteenth century a bitter feud between the Pasolini and the Attendoli, who both desired the hand of a rich heiress of those parts. The Sforza were conquered in the strife. Now that no descendants of the Sforza remain on earth, the direct heir of the victor has devoted to the daughter of the man to whom his forebears did mortal injury, some years of earnest study as a species of atavistic expiation.

Caterina Sforza is certainly one of the most characteristic figures of that rich and remarkable epoch, the fifteenth century—that great, glorious, terrible *cinque cento* when art, war, and adventure seemed to reach their zenith. The discovery of a new world, and the rapidly progressing corruption and disintegration of the Papal Church, were factors which could not fail to leave an indelible mark upon their age. The woman whose

eventful life forms the subject of this article lived through the reigns of three Popes—Sixtus IV., Innocent VIII., and Alexander VI. Her sister married the Emperor Maximilian II., and she herself became, by her marriage with Giovanni de' Medici, the ancestress of the later Stuarts, of the direct line of the kings of France, and of the present King of Spain. When the brutal Caesar Borgia was devastating Italy, and neither the Duke of Milan nor the King of Naples dared oppose him, this woman, who knew not the word fear, intrenching herself in her castle of Forlì, defied and resisted him. No soldier could fight better than she, no strategist could better defend and fortify a position, and yet she remained through all the vicissitudes of her most eventful life a true woman—beautiful, fascinating, and admired. When she died at the early age of forty-six, three times a widow, she had touched during her lifetime the extremes of human splendour and human misery. Her life is a compendium of that strange life of the middle ages whose wonderful remains greet the eye at every turn in modern Italy. Ivy-mantled ruins, magnificent temples, glorious works of art, wild stories of battle and of crime, produce upon the mind of the student an impression which can perhaps be brought into coherence in no better way than by the exhaustive study of some one central figure, which, like the one before us, stands out unique and forcible, distinguished from the rest by qualities exclusively its own.

Caterina Sforza's strange individuality cannot be properly appreciated without an account of her ancestry, on the father's side at least, for her mother was an

obscure personage. Her paternal great-grandfather was Giacomo, or Giacomuzzo, Attendolo. He was born in Cotignola, in the province of Faenza in Romagna, of a rich and noble family. His mother gave birth to twenty-one sons, who were all "nurtured in such a manner that they despised rich vestments, delicate food, and soft couches; and all had a certain valorous vigour of soul and body, by which they maintained the reputation of the family, which they often did by deeds of arms." This martial-minded ancestress unquestionably handed down some of her qualities to her descendant Caterina, the most perfect type of the Amazon of the middle ages, as sung by Boiardo, Ariosto, and Tasso. It is narrated that one day in the year 1382, as Muzzo Attendolo, then thirteen years old, was quietly working on his father's land, he heard the sounds of life and drum. These warlike strains announced the advent of some soldiers belonging to the Company of Boldrino da Panicale, who were out searching for recruits. "Oh, Muzzo!" they cried, "away with the spade, and come with us in search of fortune." Muzzo listened to them, hesitated awhile, and then flung his spade against a tree, resolved if it adhered there to follow the soldiers, but if it dropped to the ground, to stay at home. The spade, flung by so powerful an arm, remained in the tree, and Muzzo, helping himself to one of his father's horses, stole off that same night and joined the camp. After two years he returned to visit his family. "I left them without taking leave," he said; "let me at least give them the satisfaction of knowing that I am alive and well." But he thought, spoke, and dreamt only of arms and armies. "Be then a man-at-

arms," said his father, and, mortgaging a farm, he bought him four horses, arms, and accoutrements. With these Muzzo set off again, taking with him a train of relations, young and martial like himself. He was so strong and fierce that his comrades speedily bestowed on him the nickname of Sforza, *per certo indomito vigor d'animo*, little dreaming how world-famous that name was to become. Restless by nature, he would listen eagerly to the tales told of the valiant captains of his day—Broglie di Chieri, Biordo, and Acuto (as the Italians call Sir John Hawkwood). "I am as good as they," he thought; "can I not drive out the strangers who have turned Romagna into a lake of blood?" For horrible massacres had devastated the land and filled it with terror. Now among the Italians who had risen in revolt against the foreign mercenaries Ziberigo di Balbiano was conspicuous, and it was he who drew Sforza and his Attendoli after him to war. Recruiting companies passed from house to house, rousing the youths with tales of the pleasures that waited on the soldier's trade, until the fields were abandoned to old men and women. Sforza joined the "Company of St George," composed entirely of Italians who had sworn never to turn their backs upon their foreign enemies. Thus it was that the fortunes of the House of Sforza arose with the new birth of Italian valour. And Sforza was to prove the greatest and most fortunate of these *capitani di ventura*, serving alternately four Popes and four kings. On the death of Ladislaus of Naples he attached himself to his sister, Queen Joanna, who "consulted him in all matters of importance, and treated most familiarly and

affectionately" the handsome soldier. Indeed he became her lover, and she created him Commander-in-Chief of her troops. But though he rose so high, Muzzo always retained traces of his peasant origin. Thus he knew well the value of money, though he used it as a means, not an end. He never wrote down his accounts, but also never made a mistake in figures. He could have money whenever he needed it, because, according to a chronicler of the period, "of the singular love which all the bankers bore to him." His camp discipline was severe: no robbing was allowed; traitors were straightway strung up to the nearest tree and abandoned to the birds of the air. A stain or rust on armour or accoutrements provoked a beating. He who had not a fine plume upon his helmet was hissed and disgraced. Sforza would have his men-at-arms be splendid in their equipment. No gambling or swearing was permitted. On leisure days the captain joined his men in gymnastic feats, surpassing all in strength and agility. He encouraged the reading aloud of tales of chivalry, and offered rewards for translations of the warlike histories of Greece and Rome. The art of writing he never mastered. If he needed to communicate he would dictate, signing his letters with a cipher he had invented while shut up in the Castel del Ovo at Naples. He employed no clerks but friars, saying they were the best spies, for under the excuse of religion they could go anywhere. "Have you three enemies?" he said. "Make peace with the first, a truce with the second, then come down with all your might on the third and smash him well." In battle he was rash. Often his soldiers had, like those of Victor Emmanuel, to rush after

him into the thick of combat, forcing him with oaths and tears to save himself. He contended that a good soldier must look out for a good cause and not fight for pay only, yet he should never exult at the death of his enemies. Observant of all religious forms, and hearing mass daily, he yet objected to all exaggerations, deeming it "hypocrisy and stupidity to bother the Almighty with long ceremonies." His matrimonial relations were, to say the least, irregular. Francesco, his heir and mental successor, was the son of one of his mistresses.

In January 1424, Sforza, then aged fifty-five, was fighting a battle at the mouth of the river Pescara, when suddenly a strong north wind sprang up, the sea rolled heavily, and the river rose. Certain of his squadrons had remained on the farther bank, afraid to pass. Sforza, who had already crossed, signed to them to come on, and when they still hesitated, dashed into the stream to encourage them. Half-way across he looked back, and saw that his favourite page, who had followed him, was sinking. "Ah, poor boy!" he cried, "is there no one to help you?" and leaning sideways from his horse, he caught him by the hair. But in so doing he had jerked the reins—the horse, a fiery young charger, reared, and caught his heels in the river-mud, causing his rider to lose his seat. Impeded by his heavy armour, Sforza was unable to regain the shore, drowning just where the impetuous current of the river joined the billows of the sea. Twice his mailed hands were seen to clasp themselves together above the waves. No one dared brave the raging flood to rescue him. All this took place just when the victory was all but certain, for the enemy had been driven back into

the walls of Pescara. At that moment a soldier, pale and gasping, ran up to Francesco Attendolo, and told him of his father's fate. Instantly on every side arose lamentations and cries of discouragement. Francesco, unmoved, continued to fight until the victory was assured. A few hours after he sought the fatal flood, crossing it in a crazy little boat, and rowing with an oar he had rudely shaped from the branch of a tree. Kneeling bareheaded, unmoved by the darts which the enemy, who caught sight of him, directed at his frail bark, he pushed to the opposite bank, where the old soldiers of Sforza crowded weeping around him. "Be faithful to me," he said, "as you have been to my father; follow me, and with God's help I will lead you to glory and fortune. They accepted his offer then and there. But of the first great Sforza's body no trace was ever found.

Francesco's first move was to offer his services to Joanna of Naples. The queen came riding out to meet the returning army. Scarcely did she catch sight of him than she burst into tears. "Oh Sforza, Sforza!" she cried, "at least your name shall live. You shall be Francesco Sforza; this shall be the name of your brothers and your sons until all time." Such was the origin of the great and noble name.

Francesco retained no trace of the rusticity which had characterised his father. A distinguished soldier, he had already won twenty-two battles. More than once he might have been made prisoner; but when he appeared his presence carried all before it, his enemies threw down their weapons and hailed him "the common father of all men-at-arms." Like his sire, he held before his mental vision one

constant aim. His was to acquire a crown. What valour and success in arms had initiated matrimony completed. Bianca Maria, daughter of Filippo Maria, the last of the Visconti, brought him the rights and privileges of an ancient and princely name. The death of Filippo Maria found Francesco Sforza and his wife at Francesco's ancestral home of Cotignola. With 4000 horse and 2000 foot-soldiers he instantly set off for Cremona, which was his wife's by right of dowry. Filippo's widow, Maria of Savoy, was still living; but Bianca, the wife of Sforza, was not her daughter. Her mother was Agnese del Maino, a mistress of the late duke. It must always be borne in mind that in the middle ages the position of illegitimate children was entirely different from what it is to-day. Catherine Sforza herself was, as we shall see, the illegitimate daughter of a married woman. Natural children were generally treated as on a par with those born in wedlock. Consequently Bianca Maria Visconti could bring with her all the prestige and rights of a legitimate heiress. The widow, who wished to dispute her rights, called in the aid of her family, the House of Savoy. Francesco, then Captain-General of the Milanese forces, allied himself with the Venetians, and, after the victory of Caravaggio, laid siege to Milan and entered it, victorious, in February 1450. His entry was made in the most republican style; he allowed the famished multitude to pillage his soldiers, whom he compensated for their loss. The Milanese, proud of having the great chief for their ruler, had prepared a triumphal car and a robe of cloth-of-gold; but he refused them, saying that he was going to church to thank God, before whom all

men were equal, and that such honours were "superstitions of kings."

Francesco Sforza was certainly the ideal soldier of fortune. At seventy he appeared at a congress of princes in Mantua, riding erect like a young man, and mentally fresher than many there present. He was grave, handsome, affable, and calm. None ever left his presence angry or disappointed. He tried his best to maintain justice, and was always respectful to religion. In an age of bitter feuds and intolerance he founded the great hospital at Milan for the benefit of all sick persons, irrespective of distinctions of country or of creed. He recognised every one of his subjects and soldiers, and called them by their Christian names (his father remembered the names even of his soldiers' horses). To his wife Bianca he was a loving husband; he liked to have his sons about him whenever possible, and interested himself carefully in their education and training. Certainly Bianca Maria was a woman to love—beautiful, brave, and intelligent. Once, during her husband's absence, hearing that the castle of Monza had revolted, she assembled her soldiers, saying, "Who loves me will follow me," and on foot, at the head of her troops, she appeared before the rebels, who promptly yielded up the stronghold. She it was who counselled the Milanese to receive her husband and herself, promising that in Francesco they would find a father and a brother. Thus it was she who won for him her paternal State. In the observance of her religious duties she was strict, "fasting like a nun." So carefully had she been educated that she was able to direct her sons' education, setting them themes in Latin. Yet she never overlooked that they were

"to be brought up as princes, and not as *litterati*." The manners of these youths were the wonder of all who visited the Court. Some flaw there must have been, however, in the system, for none of them did credit to it in later life. Francesco Sforza died the 8th March 1466. That same night Bianca convoked the Milanese princes and exacted their oaths of fealty to her person. She also notified the sad event to the other Italian rulers—in fact did all that was needful; but, says an eyewitness, "her aspect moved all men to pity." At once she took up the reins of that Government which she had saved for her son, and held them with such wisdom that in all Italy she was spoken of with reverence. But the new Duke was rebellious,—he complained that "he was treated like a boy"; and rendered yet more haughty by his marriage with Bona of Savoy, through whom he had become connected with the King of France, he grew at last so insolent that his unhappy mother left Milan to seek shelter in her own city of Cremona. Halting at Melegnano, she was taken ill, and died blessing her children and commending her servants to their care.

Such were the paternal antecedents of Caterina Sforza, characters who, both by heredity and tradition, exercised a strong influence upon her nature, which especially bore strongly the impress of her great-grandfather, Muzzo Attendolo, the peasant of Cotignola.

Galeazzo Maria Sforza, Caterina's father, was not the equal of either his father or grandfather. He was rash, brutal, ferocious. Never having had to overcome obstacles, his character was without balance or self-control. He was ambitious of outshining every

other Court in splendour and profusion, knowing that thus he could render himself popular with the multitude. Hence he surrounded himself with learned men and artists, and, like many modern sovereigns, was himself desirous of literary fame. He certainly did not lack all civic virtues: thus he permitted no robbery in public offices, and he protected the freedom of trade. Nevertheless he wrote to one of his treasurers, "Take care that our subjects do not obtain the liberty which exists in Savoy," where at this time (1474) a representative system of government already prevailed. A contemporary called him "a monster of vice and virtue." Little by little the Court and city became corrupted by his example, until "modesty was reputed uncivilised." Galeazzo lies under the suspicion of having poisoned his mother. His deeds in Milan do not contradict this imputation. Before marrying Bona of Savoy he was contracted to another bride, Dorotea of Mantua. This Dorotea "died suddenly" at the age of nineteen in a convent at Cremona. Her death was, to say the least of it, so convenient that Galeazzo is also suggested to have had a hand in it. His marriage with Bona was celebrated by proxy. She proved an excellent wife for the eccentric and capricious Galeazzo. Many were the victims saved by her intercession from his wrath. By her he had three sons and two daughters, besides his five natural children, one of whom was the great and famous Caterina Sforza.

Caterina's mother was a certain Lucrezia, the wife of a Court official, a most beautiful woman, who was Galeazzo's first love, for his connection with her dated from his seventeenth year. The first

mention of this favourite daughter occurs in a letter written by Galeazzo when in camp to his mother, Bianca Maria Visconti. The five-year-old child was ill, and had been left in the care of her paternal grandmother, and the anxious father sent two special messengers to ask for her news. He had already legitimatised her and adopted her in every sense. The date of Caterina's birth is uncertain. It was about 1463, and occurred either at Pavia or Milan. Notwithstanding the fact that the child was taken from her, Caterina's mother always remained on friendly terms with her daughter. She was with her in Forli when Caterina's first husband was murdered, and also at the time Caterina defended the citadel against Cæsar Borgia, and it seems likely that she survived her heroic child. This domestic arrangement, which would seem so peculiar at the present day, produced no scandal at that period of easy-going morals, when the word of a father rendered the position of a natural child absolutely equal to that of those born in wedlock. The pious Bona of Savoy knew and accepted the situation, and always treated Caterina in all respects like her own daughter. From earliest childhood she must have been exceedingly beautiful and intelligent, and seems to have been a general favourite. She was promised in marriage by her father, while still a child, to Count Onorato Torelli, son of the Captain-General of the ducal troops; but Onorato died, and a more brilliant horizon opened out before our heroine. Caterina was most carefully educated. The Duke, her father, prided himself on his culture, and his Court was filled with learned men. Hence masters were easily found for the children. The

Italian princesses of the humanistic epoch were without exception well educated, enjoying the same privileges as their brothers, and receiving the same classical training. At the Italian courts of that period the position of women was in no way inferior to that of men. Matrimony was considered more as the alliance of two equal Powers than the merging of one individuality in another; and women were often called upon to reign, either independently or as regents for husbands or sons, and this had to be borne in mind in their education.

The first important event of Caterina's life was a visit she paid to Florence with her father. Lorenzo de' Medici was then ruling, and Galeazzo, who had possessed himself of Imola, was anxious to secure the Medici sanction to the proceeding; so, on pretext of a vow made to the Santissima Annunziata, he voyaged to the Medician Court. On this occasion Caterina figured as the eldest daughter of the house of Sforza. The journey was long in those days, the entertainment magnificent, so that the child never forgot it, retaining to her life's end a warm attachment to Florence and the Florentines.

Sixtus IV., that papal libertine, best remembered in these latter days in connection with the frescoes in the Sistine Chapel, which he founded, enjoys the unenviable reputation of having been the first Pope who set the example of aggrandising his own family at the expense of the Church treasury, and in defiance of all principle and example. According to Macchiavelli, he was the Pope who was to show the world how many matters, hitherto judged as wrong, could be committed under the ægis of papal authority. His pre-

decessor had been a miser, and was known to have left the coffers of the Holy See well plenished. Nevertheless Sixtus averred that there was no money in the coffers. He had sprung from a fisherman's family called Rovere, and it was thanks to Galeazzo that he had been chosen as one of the cardinals to whose papal election the Duke would oppose no veto. Hardly was he Pope than the papal Court was crowded with Rovere, collected there in order to bask under the shadow of this oak-tree¹ whose golden acorns fell into their lap. He had several real or supposed nephews, one of whom afterwards became the famous Pope Julius II. Two other nephews, the reputed sons of a sister married to a cobbler called Riario, soon after the Pope's accession began to display so much luxury and wealthy profusion that it was felt certain this could only be maintained at the expense of the treasures of the Church. Cardinal Pietro Riario even went so far as to shock the Court of Rome—not easily scandalised—by his vices and frantick expenditure. Another, Girolamo Riario, was so all-powerful that he was nicknamed the Arch-Pope. Galeazzo Sforza, in his capacity of Duke of Milan, had undertaken to arrange a marriage for this Girolamo, which marriage, owing to the bridegroom's behaviour, came to nothing. The Duke, fearing the Pope's displeasure, offered to give instead his own daughter Caterina, then ten years old. The offer was accepted, and the beautiful child became the betrothed bride of this dissolute relative of the head of the Church. "No scruple, no consideration, no respect, no pity, was evinced for Caterina in all this," says Pasolini.

"She was but the docile instrument of the paternal policy." The betrothal took place with the usual ceremonies of ring and kiss, and in September of the same year (1473) the magnificent young cardinal, Pietro Riario, paid a visit to Milan. On this occasion the marriage contract between his brother and the young Caterina was signed, while Galeazzo on his part signed an instrument by virtue of which the city of Imola, of which the Dukes of Milan had obtained possession, was to become the property of the Church, to be held in vassalage thereunto. Thus arose the pretensions of the Borgias, which were to prove so fatal to Caterina in later years. From Milan Cardinal Pietro went to Venice, where his doings were "the cause of wonder and scandal." Soon after his return to Rome he died, to the great grief of the Pope. His death placed Girolamo Riario at the very summit of greatness. He inherited his brother's wealth and all his influence over Sixtus.

It was soon after this that occurred the tragic event whose memory dominated Caterina's entire life. There lived at the Court of Milan a certain professor, Cola Montana. He was one of those beings who, lacking all practical sense, nevertheless presume to revolutionise the world without any understanding of logical sequence and the irresistible necessity of facts. Nowadays we should perhaps call him a revolutionary nihilist. He had been publicly chastised for a satire he published on the Duke, ill-advised certainly, even if perhaps but too well deserved, for Galeazzo had become after his manifold successes a very monster of violence and tyranny. Cola Montana, who had many

¹ The Rovere crest was an oak.

pupils, instilled into them the most inflammatory doctrines. For him Catiline was the first of heroes, and the slaying of a tyrant the noblest of actions. Among his pupils there were three to whom these doctrines especially commended themselves. One was Carlo Visconti, of the family that had been dispossessed by the Sforza; another was Andrea Lampugnani, who had been condemned to death by Francesco Sforza, and pardoned by Galeazzo; and yet another was Girolamo Olgiate. This last was a weak-minded, romantic creature, whose head had been turned by dreaming over the examples of classical heroism, and who was probably of much the same temperament as Wilkes Booth, the assassin of President Lincoln. These three personages concocted a conspiracy against the life of Galeazzo. They resolved to murder him during some public festival. They knew that it was not safe to attack him in his castle, nor while hunting or banqueting. What place so appropriate as a church? So the plan was resolved on, and the three invoked St Stephen to bless the success of their undertaking, which they had resolved should take place in his church. A detailed account of Galeazzo's murder was given by a servant of the Duchess, an eyewitness. He tells how it was always the habit of the Sforzas to spend Christmas with their family. At Christmas-time 1476 Galeazzo was fighting for Filibert of Savoy against Charles the Bold. He had been warned at Rome by astrologers that danger threatened him. A comet had been seen, three ravens ominously flew over his head, nevertheless he kept on his journey towards Milan. But his attendants noticed that he

seemed in "a black humour," and entered the city gates without a word of welcome to his dependents. He further commanded that mass should be said in mourning vestments in place of those gay ones proper to the festal day, and he would only listen to lugubrious chants. The day after Christmas, St Stephen's Day, Duchess Bona dreamed a bad dream. She begged her spouse not to visit St Stephen's Church, but to hear mass elsewhere. However, it was found that the Court chaplain had already gone, so Galeazzo set out on foot from the castle to follow him and attend to his devotions. Before he went he sent for his children, and it seemed as though he could not kiss them enough. The streets were slippery with ice and snow, so that he repented of his resolve to walk, and decided to proceed on horseback. His body-servant, who had taken a short cut, reached the church before him. He noticed that Lampugnani, Visconti, and Olgiate were all standing by the door together, and could not imagine why. He was soon to know. Galeazzo Maria Sforza, at the time a handsome man of thirty-two, came riding up, dismounted from his steed, and entered the church just as the choir was singing "*Sic transit gloria mundi*." Lampugnani pressed forward, calling out, "Make way! make way!" Arrived in front of the Duke, he bent his knee as if to present a petition, and in doing so he stabbed him in the stomach with a dagger he had hidden in his sleeve. Instantly the two other conspirators rushed upon their prey, who had called out just once "Oh, our Lady!" and then spoke no more. Lampugnani was instantly seized by the Duke's Moorish groom and slain on the spot.

A terrible fight ensued in the church. The women, who had come in full dress to this festal service, were robbed of their jewels. At last the Duke's guard succeeded in driving out the crowd, when three corpses were found on the pavement,—that of the Duke, of his groom, and of Lampugnani. The Duke's body was carefully tended, and laid out in the sacristy. A troop of roughs entered the building, seized the body of Lampugnani, tied a cord to its leg, and dragged it through the streets. When Bona of Savoy heard the dread news, like a true daughter of her House, ever noted for its civil courage, she did not lose her head. She sent the ducal ornaments and a pall of cloth-of-gold, which her husband had given her "in case of his sudden death," to the church, whence the Duke's body was carried and buried that same night in the cathedral. The Milanese, meanwhile, instead of rising in favour of the conspirators, were furious at the murder of the Duke. The hired assassins who had assisted the murderers were all killed on the spot, Visconti and Olgiati were tortured and executed. Olgiati confessed the whole story, whose details, full of interest, are given *in extenso* in the pages of Pasolini. This unhappy youth consoled himself for his torments by writing Latin verses, and by anticipating for himself "deathless fame" as the reward of his exploit. He said that had he had ten lives, he would have given them all in such a cause. Cola Montana, the original instigator, was, after many vicissitudes, taken and hung.

When Pope Sixtus IV. heard of the foul end of Galeazzo, he exclaimed, "The peace of Italy is dead!" In very truth this event was the signal for the outbreak of

new wars, internal feuds, and foreign invasions. Bona, the fervent Catholic, deeply distressed that her husband should have died unconfessed and unabsolved, obtained from the Pope his posthumous absolution, and in return for this favour she paid out a very heavy sum of money to be spent for pious and charitable purposes. At the time of this tragedy Caterina Sforza was fourteen. She mourned her father sincerely, and she also trembled for her own fate. But the Pope and his nephew, thinking, perchance, that there was a prospect of securing the Duchy of Milan by means of this marriage with Caterina, showed themselves quite willing to fulfil their part of the contract. The ceremony was performed by proxy, without pomp, owing to the Duke's recent death. On April 24, 1477, Caterina Riario Sforza left Milan for her husband's house. From Parma she wrote an affectionate letter to the Duchess Bona, in which she commends herself to her good mother's prayers, and a yet longer one from Imola to her sister, in which she gives an account of her solemn reception there as the wife of the city's lord. She writes that she was greeted with "verses and representations, after the Florentine fashion." She commends her servants, and especially her nurse, in the kindest manner to the Duchess's good care, and she expresses herself as unhappy beyond words at her absence from home. On the 13th of May Caterina set out from Imola for Rome. She and her whole suite accomplished the journey on horseback. In all the towns in which they halted she was received with regal honours. On the 24th she was met by the Bishop of Parma, the representative of the Duchy of Milan at Rome. The next morn-

ing she was met, seven miles from the city, by her husband. On meeting they both dismounted and exchanged kisses. Then they rode together to Ponte Molle, where curious crowds came out to meet them. They halted that night at Ponte Mario, and next day the Pope in person remarried his nephew, with all the pomp of the Church, to the girl-bride, whom the Pope styled his *nipote santissima*. The mass sung on this occasion lasted three hours, the banquet no less than five. The wedding presents were estimated at a value of 14,000 ducats. The bridegroom's gift, a pearl necklace, was in itself worth alone 5000 ducats.

Caterina was at the time accounted the most beautiful woman in all Europe, and as clever as she was handsome. Her worldly position was splendid, and until the death of Sixtus IV. her outer life consisted of one long series of *fêtes* and pleasures. But the surroundings were not sympathetic to the young girl. Moreover, her husband was a weak cowardly being, absolutely unfitted to be the companion of a fearless daughter of the Sforzas. Further, he was treacherous and wicked, and not a man to inspire her with respect or love. In 1479 there were great rejoicings in the Riario palace over the birth of Caterina's eldest son, who was baptised Ottaviano (she had already borne her husband a daughter). His godfather was Rodrigo Borgia, the Spanish cardinal, who became the infamous Alexander VI., Caterina's most cruel enemy in years to come. In August 1480 Girolamo Riario was made lord of Forli, displacing the family of Ordelaffi, who had hitherto reigned there—an event which proved to be the letting out of troubled waters in later years. In 1481 Caterina

accompanied her husband in a solemn progress through the Romagna, on which occasion they also visited Venice. The young wife delighted every one by her beauty, the splendour of her apparel, her affability, modesty, and intelligence. She moved fearlessly and unaccompanied among the people, whose goodwill she speedily won; while her husband, who had been connected discreditably with the Pazzi conspiracy, shut himself up in the Forli citadel, timid and afraid. In order to win the good graces of his new subjects, however, Girolamo played the liberal. Thus certain taxes were abolished, with after-consequences of a grave character. At Venice the Riarii were received with immense splendour, nevertheless they did not accomplish the political objects of their mission. More than one conspiracy was unmasked, and groups of victims dangled by the neck from the battlements. Lorenzino de' Medici is suspected of having had a hand in these plots. After some months spent in skirmishes, plots, and counter-plots, schemes and discussions, the Riario couple returned to Rome. How active an interest Caterina already took in the political events of her day is proved by a letter written by her to the Signoria of Genoa, in which she announces the news of the victory of Campo Morto, just brought her from the camp by special envoy. Indeed the years spent by Caterina at Riario's side formed her political education. When she was called upon, after his death, to fend for herself, we find her a complete mistress of the art of statesmanship—astute, cautious, intrepid, far-sighted, of male daring, veiled at times, for her own purposes, with a feint of female shyness and timidity. It was not for nothing that Caterina

boasted herself the true descendant of Galeazzo Maria, and that she bore his brain under her female head of hair.

Meanwhile, as time went on, Girolamo grew yet more treacherous and cruel. A dramatic story is told of another nephew of the Pope's, Antonio Bassi, who, when dying of fever, sent for Girolamo and spoke his mind to him once for all, accusing his cousin of such a list of crimes that those present left the room lest they might be compromised by hearing more. Caterina, meanwhile, was negotiating on her own account with her relatives at Milan, and with Lorenzo de' Medici at Florence, willing, and able too, to make friends and alliances apart from her husband. At the same time she attended to her already numerous family of children and to her household, and found, besides, the time for serious reading.

Meantime Sixtus, the Pope "without religion or conscience," as a contemporary called him, was dying. Some ill-success in arms had distressed him so greatly as to induce fever, which was followed by gout; and when he at last learned of the peace of Bagnolo, which left him and his nephew with empty hands, he was broken down and gave up the ghost. His corpse was carried with scant ceremony into St Peter's Church, and watched all night only by one Franciscan friar. Girolamo Riario was in camp at the time. By this death, from virtual ruler of Rome he sank to be simply a captain in the service of the States of the Church, bound to obey the orders of the College of Cardinals, who bade him desist from besieging the stronghold of the Colonnas and return to protect Rome, thrown into confusion by the Pope's demise. Girolamo obeyed. But

Caterina had her own views on the crisis. When the Pope's death occurred she was with her husband at Paliano, and when he received the order to proceed to Ponte Molle she rode back to Rome, and, boldly entering Castel Sant' Angelo, announced her intention of remaining there, in command of the castle as her husband's deputy, until the election of the new Pope should be over. Full well did this clever woman know that whoever was master of the Castle of St Angelo was also master of Rome. By her own authority she deposed the governor of the citadel, and announced to the College of Cardinals, without much ceremony or great circumlocution of speech, that she should defend the castle if need be by force of arms, and should deliver it up only to the new Pontiff. This, she declared, was the will of Sixtus. When an envoy from the Cardinals came to harass her she said, "Oh, I see he wishes to try which is the cleverest of us both. It seems he does not know that I carry the brain of Duke Galeazzo and am as headstrong as he was." The Cardinals saw that they must reckon with this energetic woman. Many of them refused to attend the conclave until "that female" should have evacuated the castle, declaring they would not defile past her. Caterina refused to budge. The Cardinals then resorted to Girolamo. They promised him, if he would induce his wife to evacuate the fortress and return to Romagna, that he should have 8000 ducats, the arrears of pay due to him for his soldiers from Sixtus, as well as compensation for his palace, which had been sacked by the mob. Girolamo was tempted by this bait and yielded, and in order to expedite matters the Cardinals themselves advanced

the necessary monies for the promised sum. But Girolamo had reckoned without his wife. Caterina still would not budge. He had made the compact, but she did not consider herself bound to abide by it. She reprovisioned the castle and brought in some 150 more foot-soldiers. When the Cardinals learnt this, they were beside themselves with anger. They threatened not to keep to the rest of their bargain, and sent her a deputation of eight Cardinals, among whom was her uncle, Ascanio Sforza. Out of consideration for her blood-relation she let down the drawbridge, and from that moment she was forced to yield. The prelates were unanimous in insisting on her departure. On August 25th Caterina stepped on the drawbridge, looking pale and wan, and no wonder. She was surrounded by her family—for she had had all her children with her, her servants, and her men-at-arms. On September 4th she entered Forli together with her husband, and on the 7th the Riario received from the new Pope, Innocent VIII., the reconfirmation of their rights over Imola and Forli, with the stipulation, however, that the couple must henceforth abide in the Romagna, and avoid Rome.

Meantime all Rome was rejoicing that the iniquitous Girolamo had been forced to leave a city which had been the theatre of his crimes. Pope Innocent VIII. and Cardinal della Rovere, afterwards Julius II., were now the real rulers of Rome.

But bad times were in store for the Riario couple. Even while Sixtus was living, and Girolamo could draw without limit on the papal coffers and the papal authority, he had found it difficult to hold the Romagna, always even

to this day a turbulent province. He found the towns divided among themselves, at feud with one another, and surrounded by envious foes, who only waited their opportunity to bear down on them. The inhabitants were even poorer than when Girolamo, in the first flush of possession, had remitted their taxes. Discontent stalked abroad, danger lurked in the air; and, to aggravate matters, there was famine in the land. In vain did Girolamo dispense coins, lower the tax on wheat, and spend money on buildings. His enemies could always find support from Lorenzino de' Medici, who had allied himself to the new Pope by giving a daughter in marriage to one of the Pope's sons. Hence the need for always keeping a large army. After a year Girolamo's coffers were exhausted. The taxes had to be reimposed. At this the famished impoverished people naturally revolted, and, but for Caterina's pluck and her ascendancy over them, a general massacre might have occurred. Meanwhile the cowardly Girolamo took fear and quitted Forli for Imola, which he deemed more loyal, leaving a substitute who was charged to oppress the people in every way. Caterina happened to be absent at the time, enlisting the support of her powerful relatives at Milan. On reaching Imola she found Girolamo very ill. "What will become of Forli if my husband dies?" she asked herself, for she mistrusted the man who held the citadel in their name. They owed him money, too, which made matters worse. Should Girolamo die he might easily make himself master of the city, and oust Caterina's son. She resolved on stratagem. Mounting her horse, she rode in one night over to Forli, appeared before the fortress, and summoned the governor to admit

her in the name of her husband and deliver up the keys. This he refused to do. He called down to his mistress that he had heard his master was dead; he would not deliver up the castle until he was paid, nor should he perchance do so even then. Now Caterina knew how matters stood. She rode back again to Imola, but not before she had concocted a little trap for this unruly servant, into which he fell, and which resulted in his murder in a drunken brawl. His murderer took possession of the fortress, drew up the drawbridge, and intrenched himself. When a breathless rider brought the news to Imola, Caterina, although she was near her confinement, at once mounted her horse and galloped as hard as its feet would go to Forli, and appeared at the foot of the castle ere ever its inmates could have deemed it possible. She commanded the new governor, who was an old acquaintance,—no less than the governor of the Castle of St Angelo, whom she had deposed,—to deliver up the stronghold. After a long debate he yielded at last to Caterina's imperiousness, and the following day Caterina, attended by only one female servant, took possession, rode back to Imola, then rode back again to Forli, bringing with her as new governor Tommaso Feo of Savona, one of her trusty servants, whom she installed, and announcing to the astonished population that there was a governor in the castle now after her own heart, remounted her horse, never halting for ten hours till she reached Imola, to give birth after a few days to her son Francesco Sforza. Nor was this all. Not many days had passed since this confinement before the trusty new governor announced to his mistress that a conspiracy, instigated by the Ordelaffi, had been discovered.

Instantly this brave woman arose from her sick-bed, remounted her steed, and flew to Forli. The six chief conspirators were beheaded by her orders, and their heads gibbeted on the city gate, and the rest punished according to their deserts.

Now since the real lord of Forli was never seen, and no one but his wife was permitted to enter his sick-room, the news very naturally spread that he was dead, and that Caterina was concealing the fact in order to ensure dominion to herself. That this was not so, however, was soon to be seen. One day in November, though still weak and ailing, Girolamo rode to Forli to see how matters stood with his own eyes. It was but a poor look-out. The winter proved hard; the burghers had lost respect for their master; he could not pay his way, and angry rumours were heard on all sides whenever he showed himself. Even Caterina's presence could no longer stem the rising tide of discontent. Prime leaders of the turbulent faction were the powerful family of Orsi, and it was they who resolved on the murder of Girolamo. The deed was done with great audacity. On April 14, 1488, Checco d'Orsi, captain of the watch, with two hirelings, walked unannounced into the apartment where the Duke was at supper. The meal was just over, and Girolamo was talking with his guests. When he saw Checco enter he stretched out his hand to him and asked what he desired at this unwonted hour. Checco muttered some words of reply, rushed on the unwitting and unarmed man and stabbed him to the heart. With a cry of "Ah, traitor!" Girolamo sank down, and in a few minutes he was dead. The Duke's people, unarmed as they were, at once ran to Caterina's apartments to bring her the dread

news. Not for one moment did she lose her head. Without armed protection, having with her only her mother, her sister, her children, and two wet-nurses, she at once commanded that her doors be barricaded with every available heavy object. It was in vain. An angry mob had already invaded the castle, a bloody tussle ensued under Caterina's windows in the courtyard, and in the end she had to yield herself up to her husband's assassins. She was led a prisoner to the palace of the Orsi. But such was the majesty of her presence and the respect she inspired, that, as she marched through the drunken and infuriated mob, not a person dared to insult by act or speech the handsome woman who but a few hours before had been their ruler. When a man tried to be rude to her sister, she boxed his ears in such fashion that he staggered.

The Orsi were not long to remain masters of the situation, however. The news of Forlì's revolt reached Rome and Milan, and the former hastened to reclaim the fief for the States of the Church, while the latter reminded Caterina's enemies that they would have to reckon with the strong House of Sforza did they touch a hair of her head. And as soon as the papal envoy arrived he treated Caterina with all respect, withdrew her from the house of the Orsi, where she was treated with scant kindness, and placed a guard of honour before her dwelling to protect her life and position. In return it was demanded, however, that she should command the governors of the various fortresses to render up their keys to the papal authorities; and though it was politely asked, Caterina knew she must obey, for might was against her, and she was still to all intents and purposes a prisoner.

Surrounded by her husband's murderers, Caterina appeared before each of the citadels and bade their commanders resign their office into her hands. They respectively appeared on the battlements and cried down they could not obey. "In that case they will murder me," shouted back the dauntless woman, and indeed a soldier already pointed a gun at her breast. "Let them beware of the wrath of the Duke of Milan an' they do," cried back the fearless Feo. Caterina pleaded in vain, and had to retreat discomfited.

When the papal envoy, Monsignore Savelli, saw that these attempts were futile, he sought to gain his ends by force. But the citadels were well stocked with arms and provisions, and were able to sustain a long siege. Meantime Caterina had found means of communicating with her trusty Tommaso Feo. She persuaded him to send a messenger to Monsignore, telling him he could not give up the citadel—it would be a breach of trust; but if Caterina was admitted, and he was convinced that she demanded this concession of her own freewill and not because pressure was brought to bear on her by her enemies, he would evacuate. Savelli was willing to consent, but the Orsi suspected in this reply a wile of the clever Caterina. Once more they dragged her before the fortress walls. Caterina implored Tommaso amid tears and sobs to deliver up the citadel. The governor remained firm in his negative attitude. Conversation was naturally difficult between a governor on the battlements and a person outside the moat and drawbridge; so Caterina cried, "If they would only let me go into the castle, I know I could explain everything to you." "In that case," replied Feo, "I hardly know what I should do, but cer-

tainly it would be easier to negotiate. I have already proposed this, but with the condition that you come alone." The peace-loving Savelli was taken in; and remembering that he held Caterina's children as hostages, he consented that the Duchess should enter the castle for three hours in order to arrange details with Feo. The drawbridge was lowered, and Caterina sprang upon it with one bound. Scarcely was she across than she made a gesture to those at the other side which still betokens the highest point of insult and derision to Italian eyes. The three hours over, when Orsi demanded her exit, Feo's son replied that only if the two foremost burghers of Forli were given as hostages would his mistress return. Maddened by this betrayal, the besiegers rode off to seek aid. Caterina meantime had sunk into a dead sleep, and was reposing placidly after the excitement and fatigue of the last days.

But Savelli and the Orsi were not so easily daunted and befooled. They had only gone to fetch Caterina's children and relatives. Her sister Stella, her boy Ottaviano, were bade to plead with her, reminding her that their own lives were at stake did she remain obdurate. Feo did not even trouble to wake his mistress. When the cries from without after awhile became too strident, Caterina awoke and, undressed as she was, rushed to the tower to see what it all meant. When she convinced herself that there was no danger she withdrew without a word. Her quick intelligence had told her that since her children had not been massacred in the first fury of her enemies, they were safe, and that it was clear the Orsi dared not brave the wrath of the formidable Ludovico il Moro. So, to prove that she was the mistress of the

citadel, she caused shots to be fired at the town at intervals, night and day, directing them particularly at the Communal Palace.

And truly Caterina was soon to be the actual mistress of the situation. Shortly after her clever manœuvre heralds arrived from the Bentivoglio of Bologna and the Sforza of Milan demanding to see Riario's children, and announcing that the Milanese troops were within a day's march. Meanwhile Orsi and Savelli maintained their defiant attitude, saying the children whom they had imprisoned were dead, and that they could and would resist. But when a powerful army of some 12,000 men really stood at the city gates, they recognised that their game was lost. As a last revenge they tried to penetrate to the children and murder them, but their faithful guards beat back the attack. There remained nothing but flight for the Orsi. At dead of night they stole away, seventeen in number, leaving behind them their old father and womenfolk. And that same night the counter-revolution was accomplished, and the people patrolled the streets of Forli shouting "Ottaviano! Ottaviano!" The only dread that now weighed on the inhabitants was the fear of the soldiers of the Duke of Milan, to whom it had been promised, if Caterina consented, that they should sack the city. But Caterina refused to allow this, to the fierce indignation of the troops. This she did for the sake of the women, for whom she had a consideration wholly in advance of her time. When the magnates of the city came to the castle to tender their homage and excuses to Caterina she received them graciously, clad in mourning weeds. But when, a few hours later, her young son, Ottaviano, now lord of Forli, was led into her presence and fell weep-

ing into his mother's arms, he found her clad in all her royal splendour, magnificent in her beauty and her radiant attitude of triumph.

And in triumph she re-entered Forli, surrounded by the lords of Mantua, Bologna, Bergamo, Milan, and others, and triumphantly she resumed the reins of government; for though Ottaviano was nominally the lord, in reality it was his mother who reigned. Her first steps were directed to the church of the city's patron saint, Mercuriale. It happened to be his feast-day. After hearing mass and thanking heaven for its protection, Caterina at once occupied herself with worldly affairs. To begin with, she sought to punish the rebels and the murderers of her husband. She demanded and received the value of what had been stolen from their palace; she banished, executed, tortured in the most relentless mode, all who had been directly or indirectly concerned in the uprising. Orsi's old father was killed in the most abominable fashion, after he had been morally and physically tortured. There was no end to the bloodshed, the reprisals, the revenge. So terrible was Caterina's vengeance that it overshot its mark, and made her fresh enemies among her subjects. Even the most pessimist of moderns, reading these accounts, must admit that a change for the better has taken place in human progress.

Alas for heroic Caterina! She might build and endow as many churches as she would to prove her pious spirit, she might remit taxes, she might enjoy the protection of Pope and Duke, nevertheless her edifice was but reared on sand. Notwithstanding, this doughty woman managed for yet another twelve years to uphold her authority, and only ceded to

brute force. Perhaps she would not even have ceded to that, had she not ceded before to a yet stronger force, though apparently more gentle. It was the little god of love with his bow and dart who was to cause the mischief.

At the time of her widowhood Caterina was but twenty-five years old — handsome, respected, admired, feared. No wonder that she was soon surrounded with aspirants to her affection — affection that she had hitherto never bestowed; for though she could not possibly have loved the cowardly cruel Girolamo, she made him a faithful wife. Even though he had of late left all the cares and responsibilities of government in her hands, yet he was an apparent support to her nevertheless: she could shield herself in face of her foes under his fictitious will. Now she was all alone, and a widow. On the other hand, Caterina, however much she might long, with her fiery Romagnolo blood, to love and be loved, never lost her keen insight. She knew that should she marry she would lose the guardianship over her children, and would no longer reign as their proxy,—would have to resign them into the hands of guardians, who would more than probably oust them from their possessions; and this, for their sake, whom she tenderly loved, and for her own, she could not contemplate. But many conflicts must have waged their angry fights in that woman's proud breast. Girolamo had not been long dead ere rumour said that his widow was about to wed the handsome young Ordelaffi of Forli. And her behaviour to him certainly gave colour to this report. When she heard it, however, she was furious, and punished with imprisonment and banishment those who had dared to spread or report it—pun-

ished them so severely, so out of all proportion to the crime, that for ever after no one dared to open their mouths concerning her love-affairs; and even when she openly flaunted them, they acted the part of the emperor's new clothes. Many moderns could wish they could put down idle and cankerous cackle concerning their private affairs with an equally drastic hand. For the report, like too many such reports, had done her real harm. The governors of her citadels, who, after all, had sworn allegiance to Ottaviano, not to her, grew restless, and seemed inclined to dispute her authority. Even Tommaso Feo grew suspicious and disobedient. To conciliate him she married him to her step-sister Bianca. Even this did not suffice. Then she feigned love for him herself, and tricked him out of the castle by her seductive ways. Scarcely had he fallen into the trap than she took him prisoner in another sense from what he expected, and elevated his younger brother Giacomo in his stead. It was on Giacomo that she had really set her eyes. As he appears in the Forli fresco, he was certainly just the kind of man to catch the fancy of an amazon like Caterina—a ruddy-cheeked, curly-haired giant. Thus this young man, barely twenty, found himself in a moment governor of the two chief forts of the domain, commander-in-chief of the troops, as well as Caterina's proxy and lover. He was the Ruy Blas of his age. "Fortune carried this man at one and the same time into the heaven of Venus and of Mars," says a contemporary chronicler. After a time she secretly married him, but woe to her subject who would have dared to state the fact!

After this event, and after she

had given over to trusty dependents the other important outposts of her domain, Caterina felt more at ease. Yet it was not long ere she became the slave of the young tyrant she had chosen for herself. Giacomo, like all upstarts, lost his head at the splendour of the position into which he had so suddenly been elevated. He treated the ancient families of Forli with haughty disdain; he even treated the real lord of Forli, Ottaviano, with such arrogance that the boy detested him and vowed revenge for these insults. And since every one deemed him Caterina's lover and not her husband, his insolent attitude was held the more unpardonable.

While these things were happening in Forli, on the larger stage of Italian affairs there were new difficulties and dangers to meet. Innocent VIII. was dead, and Alexander Borgia reigned in his place. He had been Ottaviano's godfather, and promised Caterina that he would care for her boy as Sixtus had cared for her. He even offered him his daughter, the notorious Lucrezia Borgia, to wife; but this Caterina refused, much to the Pope's displeasure. Lorenzo de' Medici too was dead, and with his disappearance from politics these were thrown into yet greater confusion; for no doubt, with all his faults, he had known how to steer the ship of State. His death threw the peninsula into two hostile camps, both of whom sought to win over the alliance of Caterina, whose army they knew to be well organised, and whose little State was important as lying on the highroad from Upper to Lower Italy. Caterina, like the wise helmswoman she was, tacked her course, waiting to see which party would offer her most advantages; but when Charles VIII. of France came into Italy as the ally of the

Pope, Caterina, after some dubious attempts at a neutral attitude, put herself on the side of the French. When the latter did not maintain their compacts, and plundered and sacked friendly cities, Caterina boldly entered their camp, and saved her city from the claws of the hungered and booty-craving Gallic troops. Then, later, when events took yet another turn, Caterina, without a moment's hesitation, made a *volte face* and tacked cleverly between the contending parties.

Could she but have tacked as cleverly in her own family, where matters were going from bad to worse! Ottaviano, who was now sixteen, and who chafed under the arrogant bearing of Feo, whom he regarded as merely his servant, was confirmed and strengthened in his aggressive attitude by Feo's enemies—and they were many, provoked by his insolent bearing. Though by nature weak and timid, there were limits beyond which Ottaviano could not endure; and when on one occasion the lad contradicted him, the *parvenu* gave his young lord a sounding box on the ear. This was too much for even the lackeys. One of these put himself in accord with certain noblemen of Forlì to plot the murder of Giacomo Feo. In those days it was easy to find *bravi* to execute these little jobs; indeed their race is not quite extinct in modern Italy. One August evening (1495) Caterina, her daughter Bianca, her Court ladies, her sons Ottaviano and Cesare, and a large following of retainers, returned to the city from a hunting excursion. Caterina drove, the rest were on horseback. The day's sport had been good, the booty was large, the party merry, and, singing and laughing, they pursued their way through the crooked streets. A halt was made by a

bridge. When all had passed except Feo, an accomplice stopped him to ask a trivial question, and at that signal the murderers fell upon him, killed and mutilated him, and then threw him into the moat. Caterina, when she heard his first cry, left her carriage, and seizing the first horse that came to hand, sprang upon it and galloped to the citadel. Her guilty sons sought shelter in a friendly house. Only two of all the suite turned upon the murderers, who coolly replied that they had but executed the orders of Caterina and her sons. Caterina, when she heard this, was beside herself. Indeed both her fury and her grief were great, for she had loved Feo devotedly. Her vengeance on his murderers was terrible. Never in all her life had she been so cruel, so merciless. On this occasion she spared neither women nor children: it seemed as though she would extirpate the whole clan of her foes. Indeed so great was her cruelty that, iron woman though she was, relentless and with no trace of mawkishness in her composition, yet nevertheless remorse for her actions at this time is said to have embittered all her later life. As for the real instigator of the murder, Ottaviano, she shut him up in solitary confinement, and it wanted little but he would have died under her hands.

Happily her attention was necessarily distracted by politics. Madonna di Forlì was a great personage, respected and feared in the political world. Her soldiers, whom she trained herself, were the most skilful in Central Italy. Her alliance was worth winning. The Medici, being reinstated in the government of Florence, whence Savonarola had evicted them, sought to win her over to their side and that of the French. To

this end they sent her an envoy in the shape of Giovanni de' Medici. They could have made no wiser move. Giovanni was clever, but what was more, Giovanni was the handsomest man of his day. He had not long been at Forlì ere rumour said he was Caterina's lover. Of course she denied it,—denied it even after she had borne him a son, even after he and all his suite openly lived in her castle. At last, however, she had to admit the fact to her relations and her son, who sanctioned the marriage, but comprehended the need for continued secrecy, lest Caterina should lose the guardianship of her first children. The danger of this was great, and to stem it Caterina and all her progeny present and to come were created Florentine citizens; and this act legitimised the first-born of her connection with Giovanni, he who afterwards became the famous *condottiere*, Giovanni delle Bande Nere, called "the first colonel of a regiment," and who was unquestionably the father of modern military discipline. On another occasion there was sent to Caterina as Florentine envoy no less a personage than Niccolò Macchiavelli. He found, it seems, her diplomatic talents a match for his own, for in his letters to the signoria he tells, among other things, how on certain days Madonna was not visible because "the baby was ill."

The union with Giovanni was not to be of long duration. To aid the Florentines, sore pressed by Pisa, Caterina sent her husband and son with a picked army to join her allies. While in camp Giovanni was taken seriously ill. Caterina hastened to his side, and he died in her arms. She was inconsolable; and indeed she had lost much in him, and from this time forward her star was on the wane. It is characteristic of the times

that after his death Caterina made her marriage publicly known.

Alexander VI. was, if possible, even more ambitious for his family than Sixtus IV. It was his desire to found a kingdom for his favourite son, Caesar Borgia, and to this end he wished to stir up dissatisfactions in Italy, to oust the Sforzas from Milan, Caterina from the Romagna, and pass the whole under one head. A pretext for dissension was soon found in those days, and after a while the Venetians and the Borgias, in alliance with the French, grew menacing for Caterina's little realm. At first she clung to her old alliance with Florence, but soon found that this was a broken reed. In those days her life was that of the camp. She herself led her troops to battle; and it was due solely to her personal watchfulness and military stratagem that Forlì was not taken by a military ruse. Clad in a full suite of chain-armour, she rode with her captains. To this day there is shown at the Museum of Bologna a suit of lady's armour believed to be hers. It is said that she kept her accounts when in camp with the greatest accuracy, and that her soldiers were always well paid and well fed. And she had need of them, left thus alone to defy single-handed the power of the allied forces of Caesar Borgia and the King of France, who were devastating Italy. On every side treachery surrounded the dauntless woman, and many a statesman would have given in in despair under such circumstances, nor would any have blamed him. But Caterina was not made of stuff that could so easily be daunted. Notwithstanding the heavy odds against her, notwithstanding that the plague raged in her little kingdom, and that her youngest and dearly-loved boy lay sick unto death, she prepared her

men-at-arms and her fortress for resistance, and at the same time, by measures as swift and effectual as any that could be used at the present day, she checked the progress of the plague before it had taken too vast proportions. The strong places were provisioned and ammunitioned for a siege, the advance of the enemy was rendered difficult by artificial inundations. Daily Caterina passed her army in review; she attended to everything herself, great or small. A ride across the Apennines to Florence convinced her that she could hope for no help thence—the Florentines were themselves in an ugly difficulty with Pope Borgia; but as she still deemed them her best friends, she sent all her children except her eldest sons, all her jewels and valuables, to a country house of her late husband's, close by the Arno city, for safe-keeping.

Then, absolutely alone and unsupported, this heroic woman intrenched herself in her citadel and awaited the approach of Cæsar Borgia and his hordes, resolved to uphold, while breath and strength were in her, the noble *condottiere* traditions of the great Sforza name, to which her uncle of Milan had proved untrue. Nearer and nearer drew the Borgia troops. Their first point of attack was Imola, which, though it was strongly walled and defended, they were able to take at once owing to treachery. Their next march was on to Forlì, where Caterina herself held the stronghold. Up to the last moment of the foe's approach she had contrived to fortify her position, sparing nothing—no garden, however dear to her, no house that might prove of value as a point of vantage. Still she did not wholly trust her citizens, though they had sworn they would stand by her to the bitter end. They knew, too, as well as she

the reputation borne by Cæsar's soldiers—verily no good one—and what awaited their city did it fall into his clutches. Still, when the critical moment approached, Caterina, who expected no deeds of heroism from her subjects, deemed it well to ask the city magnates what it was they meant to do: they had better tell her candidly. A candid and direct answer it is always difficult to get from an Italian. They sent vacillating and ambiguous replies. Caterina should consider well ere acting; was it not perhaps better to yield to superior force? there might be a change of Popes, and then she and her family would be reinstated; all the cardinals had not voted in favour of Cæsar,—and suchlike empty phrases. Then Caterina spoke up. "Oh, chicken-livered, do you not comprehend that a ruined State is still better than none? Do what you please with your city, but with regard to the citadel I will show the Borgia that a woman is also capable of shooting cannons." After this defiant speech the city fathers held council, with the result that they resolved to abandon any attempts at resistance. Caterina received their messengers graciously, bade them a courteous farewell, and then, as soon as they had re-entered the city gates, let her cannons play over them a little as a sign that she was resolved to resist to the uttermost. And indeed her army and stores were large, and Caterina's courage, which she diffused to all about her, seemed inexhaustible as well.

On December 19, 1499, amid streaming rain, Cæsar Borgia, mounted on a white horse, rode into Forlì at the head of his 4000 men. The standard of the Church was borne before him; beside him rode Frenchmen of high standing and honour. Scarcely, however,

were the men disbanded than their wild work of rapine, plunder, and loot began, and was pursued with the more vigour because, owing to the heavy rain, the men sought shelter in the houses. Cæsar, who did not wish to make a bad impression on his new citizens, tried to stem their excesses in a measure, but it was quite in vain. They were beyond his control, or rather they were acting as he had ever allowed them to do. Meantime Caterina held the fortress, and Cæsar could not even begin his attack, for his battering ammunition had not yet arrived. On Christmas Day Caterina displayed a flag bearing a lion on its field. This was a ruse on her part, and it succeeded; for the sight of this lion spread terror among her enemies, who held it for the standard of St Mark, and deemed that Caterina had that powerful republic behind her. To further enforce this idea, Caterina sent continual volleys of cannon into her late city. Cæsar began to think discretion the better part of valour, and resolved to attempt a friendly solution of the problem. He humiliated himself so far as to ride out one evening to the fortress, attended only by a trumpeter, and asked for a personal colloquy with the Countess. Caterina instantly appeared on the battlements above the drawbridge. Cæsar lifted his helmet respectfully and addressed her. What the two foes said to one another the contemporary chroniclers do not know, while later historians give the conversation in great detail. After a time Caterina bowed politely and withdrew, while Cæsar turned his horse about and rode off. His mission cannot have seemed entirely hopeless to him, for next day he again rode out to the castle and offered to give Caterina his three French captains as hostages of his word. But this

offer too Caterina refused. She did not trust the word of a Cæsar Borgia, and no wonder. Consequently no solution but war to the knife was possible. On December 28, 1499, he opened his attack on the citadel, and Caterina answered bravely. This went on for some days. Caterina herself inhabited the topmost tower of the citadel, whence she could survey the whole neighbouring country and the movements of her foes. Thence she saw the sun set on the century, a *fin de siècle* not effete and exhausted like our own, but fierce and bloody, like a wounded beast at bay. The situation was pretty desperate. There was no retrogression possible. Cæsar placed a price of 10,000 ducats on her head; she answered, offering 150,000 for his. For a time all went well. What the besiegers destroyed in the day, Caterina and her men repaired at night. She was indefatigable, and, a cuirass over her dress, she passed from point to point, advising, encouraging, helping. But at last the besiegers got the upper hand and penetrated into the fortress. Even then Caterina did not yield. She caused a tower in which they had intrenched themselves to be undermined and exploded. But more and ever more of the enemies' men entered the castle, and at last it was only Caterina's dwelling-place that was not in their hands. Then she resolved on taking a desperate measure. Surrounded by her brothers and suite, she burst in among her enemies, wounding, killing, trampling them down in their frantic efforts to cut their way through. A wild scene of murderous confusion ensued. Caterina was taken several times, but her people succeeded in rescuing her again from the hands of Borgia's men. For two hours the wildest confusion reigned in the court-

yard; yet even when she knew full well that the game was lost, Caterina would not give herself up. She made a last forlorn effort to evict the foe by smoking him out, causing every available bit of wood to be lighted. And it almost seemed as if this measure was to meet with some success, when suddenly the wind veered and the thick waves of smoke were turned on the besieged in lieu of the besiegers. Even then Caterina was not crushed. Under cover of the smoke she still fought desperately; but when the fumes lifted for a moment, she saw to her dismay that without her orders a white flag of truce had been drawn up on her towers, and that white handkerchiefs were waving from the stems of lances and firelocks. Then, and then only, Caterina admitted she was vanquished, and retired from the scene of action into her fastness. Meanwhile, though the fighting was ended, murder and plundering continued till far into the night; and when all was over 450 corpses were picked up from the courtyard floor, not to mention the hundreds of wounded men who lay about on all sides.

Cæsar Borgia was not on the spot when the fortress surrendered. At the news he instantly took to horse, and gave orders to watch closely, for he feared his prey might still escape him. Then he summoned Caterina to treat with him. When she heard the notes of his trumpeter, she appeared at a window of her eyrie. Cæsar bade her peremptorily to issue orders that the murdering below should cease. She was about to answer him when an iron hand seized her by the nape of her neck. A *landsknecht* had penetrated into her last retreat and declared her his prisoner. She bowed a courteous leave-taking to Cæsar Borgia,

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as though saying she had to quit him against her will, and gave herself up to the captain-general of the French forces. Borgia claimed her as his prey. After some squabbling, the Frenchman yielded her up in return for a large sum of money. Then Caterina was led out of the citadel, a prisoner, to Borgia's palace at Forli. What a different entry was this to that which she had made erewhile! Her path lay over the wounded and dying, and past ruins, desolation, and misery. Up to this point Cæsar Borgia had behaved with all due politeness and respect to his foe. But when he found that she had not her children with her, as he deemed, when he had searched in vain for them among the ruins of the stronghold, and listened to Caterina's triumphant tones, telling him that these victims had at least escaped his wrath, then his true nature asserted itself, and he subjected her to every indignity and shame and abomination, of which only a Borgia could be capable. His worthy father, the Pope, had bidden him kill Caterina; but when he too learnt the news that her children were safe, he countermanded the order, and bade his son bring their prisoner to Rome. Clad in a handsome gown of black satin, her head wreathed in black, Caterina rode beside her enemy out of the city that had been hers, only two servants and two maids of honour accompanying her. Cæsar had not well started on his journey when he was stopped by the French captain-general, who declared that he must deliver up Caterina, as it was against the French law to take prisoner a woman. This sudden outburst of knightly feeling rested, however, on no sounder basis than the fact that Borgia had not paid out in

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full the sum he had promised in return for his prisoner. After some wretched haggling among these worthy comrades, Caterina was at last handed over again to Borgia, and the custodian of French honour went off satisfied with a pocketful of ducats.

The indignities Caterina had to suffer at the Borgias' hands on this ride to Rome passes words. On February 25, 1500, the Eternal City was at last reached. It has been told that Cæsar Borgia led his prisoner in triumph through the streets of Rome as erst the Emperor Aurelian led Queen Zenobia; but this is not true. The Pope himself came out to meet her, and received her courteously, confining her in the Belvedere of the Vatican with twenty men to guard her. It was while in this place that she learnt the dread news of the discomfiture of the whole House of Sforza, her uncle the Cardinal and Ludovico il Moro having both been carried prisoners to France. Not even this blow broke the dauntless spirit. She busied herself in planning a mode of escape. It failed, however, and coming to the Borgias' ears, they deemed it wiser to put her in safer keeping; so she was removed to the Castle of St Angelo, which she had once held defiantly against the whole College of Cardinals. There was an irony of fate truly in this, which doubtless did not escape the notice of this clever woman. That the Borgias did not employ their favourite methods of poison upon her is a marvel. That they desired her death is certain; for when after a while, owing to confinement and harsh treatment, she fell seriously ill, they could hardly conceal their disappointment that she did not die. They even went so far as to accuse her of trying to poison them, and had her tried on this plea; but at the trial, besides

roundly denying the accusation, she made such revelations as to the manner in which the Pope and his worthy son had behaved to her, that the Pope caused the trial to be swiftly broken off, and bade that no further reference be made to it. But besides physical sufferings and privations, Caterina had to endure mental trials. Her eldest sons urged her to cede her rights on Imola and Forlì in return for money and a cardinal's hat and bishop's mitre respectively. Further, she mourned the absence of her adored youngest son, Giovanni, whom Lorenzino de' Medici tried to withdraw from his mother's guardianship. For eighteen months did she thus languish in prison, nor would she have been released perchance even then but for a curious incident. In June 1501, the same captain-general of the French troops who had delivered her over to Cæsar Borgia as a hostage passed through Rome on his march against Naples. While going through Upper Italy he had heard the people singing the tragic fate of Caterina in many a folk-song,—for Caterina, her adventures, her joys, and her sorrows, had already become legendary, and inflamed the poetic imagination of the Italian people. The most popular of these songs was entitled "Lamento." The verse of this long lament is rough, but not without melody. Its burden goes—

"Scolta questa sconsolata
Caterina da Forlivo."

"Listen to the broken-hearted
Caterina of Forlivo."

"I who wore scarlet," she says, "must now wear mourning. No armed knight comes to help me. All the world murmurs against ungrateful Italy. I do not mind dying if I die in my own strong citadel." She sings of her sons

Ottaviano and Galeazzo, of her uncle the Duke of Milan, of the King of France, of the Duke of Savoy, of the Venetians, the Genoese. She mentions all her captains by name. It is easy to fancy the women singing these melancholy verses in the long winter evenings as they sit spinning round their flickering oil-lamps, singing it to those curious half-Arabic tunes of theirs, which have a long-drawn note at the end, —tunes that are always echoing among the Italian hills. It was thus that the French captain learnt that Cæsar Borgia had not kept his word, and that Caterina was, after all, a prisoner. He knew, further, that his master the King of France, like all Europe, for the matter of that, was indignant at the general behaviour of the Borgias. Arrived in Rome, he instantly demanded Caterina's liberation in the name of the King of France, and under the plea that she had become his subject when taken prisoner, and that Frenchmen did not imprison women. Cæsar, like the coward he was, blustered and swore and protested, but yielded at last, because he could not do otherwise. Caterina had to sign a document renouncing for herself and her sons their rights over their realm, had to pay 2000 ducats to the Borgia for expenses, and was then free to leave her dungeon. She took up her abode in Rome in the splendid palace of Cardinal Riario, known as the Cancelleria to this day.

When she had ridden forth, thin and pale, from her prison, she was so changed that she was almost unrecognisable; for beside the havoc wrought on her person by the damp cells of the Castle of St Angelo and the tortures to which the Borgias had subjected her, the solitary confinement, the want of active employment, had given her time for thought, and she remem-

bered and repented many of her deeds of blood with a remorse that took so acute a form that her sons had frequently to implore her not to let herself "be thus tempted by the devil to despair, and remember that one drop of Christ's blood would suffice to justify your Excellency and to wipe out all the sins of hell." These haunting fears made her restless, her longing after her youngest born made her desire to be near him, and she therefore asked and obtained a safe-conduct from the Pope to travel to Florence. In the end she did not make use of it. She mistrusted Cæsar Borgia, and feared he might cause her to be taken by some of his minions. At dead of night she stole away by sea to Ostia, and thence to Leghorn. At Florence her brother-in-law Lorenzino received her courteously, and installed her in the house of her dead husband Giovanni, the beautiful Villa di Castello, which lies at the foot of Monte Morello, and which is now a royal country-house. Between this house and a cooler residence in the Casentino, where she pursued her favourite occupations of agriculture and cattle-breeding, were passed the last years of this heroic warrior-woman. But even here peace was not hers. First she was implored by her late subjects, who groaned under Cæsar Borgia's rule, to come to their aid; a new marriage was projected for her, that should strengthen her rights to Forlì. She rejected these offers. Even *her* energy was somewhat broken. Then her sons harassed her with demands for money and with reproaches. Further, she was anxious about the fate of Giovanni. Lorenzino de' Medici had tampered with the boy's patrimony, and in order to hide this, he meditated attacks upon his nephew's life. She appealed against her brother-in-law and won her cause;

but as she did not trust either him or the law, she hid the boy, dressed in girl's clothes, in a Florentine convent. The character and career of Giovanni delle Bande Nere, it has been remarked, has much analogy with that of Achilles. This circumstance makes the analogy yet closer. The education of this wild ungovernable boy, over whom alone his mother had some control, was the chief occupation and anxiety of her latter years.

Caterina never regained for her eldest son the possessions he had lost. The Borgias were dead, it is true, but the grasp of the Church relaxed not upon the lordships they had gained by every species of crime. Ottaviano meanwhile had become a cardinal. Caterina's life as a widow was certainly exemplary, even if it was not peaceful or free from care. In April 1509 she was taken seriously ill, but to all appearance recovered. Her son Ottaviano wrote affectionately to inquire for her at this time. In May she fell ill once more, and after ten days lay dead in the Florentine palace of the Medici. Her illness seems to have been renal calculus, from which she suffered acute pain; but her intelligence was keen to the last. She knew she was dying, and declared her intention of making her will. She provided carefully for all her dependents, and, as a citizen of Florence, left a large sum towards the building of the cathedral. Her faithful confessor was charged to say a thousand masses for her soul. Her son, Giovanni de' Medici, was left sole heir of all her Florentine possessions. Only her daughter Bianca, her eldest child, is not mentioned. She had probably received her portion at her marriage. This will was considered by her contemporaries as "a marvel of prudence and justice." When she had ful-

filled this act she received the sacraments, and shortly after the tolling of the bell of San Lorenzo warned the Florentines that the "Lady of Imola" was dying. It is not known whether any of her children were with her at the crisis. She was buried by her own desire in the convent of the Murate. An inscription was placed over the spot where her remains were laid, but this, with the remains themselves, disappeared when the convent, in 1835, was turned into a prison. *Sic transit gloria mundi.*

No sketch of Caterina Sforza's life is complete without a reference to her wonderful recipe-book, which Pasolini prints almost entire, and which proves that Caterina was as capable a housekeeper as a warrior. Some are omitted, not, says Pasolini, because they are immoral, but because they are expressed in terms inconsistent with the usages of the present day. A notable feature is the number of disinfectants and preventives against contagion it contains. Upon this important point Caterina was very far in advance of her age. Many of the recipes are for enhancing and preserving beauty. Some are for concocting poisons.

After Caterina's death the wildest legends crystallised about her person. "Superhuman strength, angelic beauty, ferocious and vindictive character," such are the attributes of the legendary Caterina Sforza of whom the populace of Imola still retain the tradition. Pasolini holds that the explanation is to be found in the fact that in her image are personified all the strange tales of the warlike ladies of great families who succeeded each other in the government of the Romagna during the middle ages (Tranversari,

Da Polenta, Malatesta, Ordelaffi, Manfredi, Pagani), and also the strange female companions of the papal legates who succeeded them. At Forli there still lingers the tradition of a subterranean passage which led from the citadel to the palace and to other castles in the vicinity. At Imola, especially among the peasants of the mountains, there exist many wonderful legends. There is a ruined castle, which was never hers, but which tradition gives to Caterina, and a column is shown which is said to stand over the trap-door of the pit into which she flung her victims. At Monte Poggiolo and Castrocaro pits are shown, called the "Queen's Well," said to have been used for the same purpose. At Pancaldoli, a village on the frontier between Tuscany and Romagna, where Caterina is stated to have retired after she lost Forli, the people even to this day state that she is often seen, beautiful and terrible, holding a lantern in her hand which shoots out sparks of fire. Especially at Christmas-time does she appear, at the hour of the midnight Mass. Further, she is said to have given balls in the citadel of Riolo, from which none of the guests ever returned.¹ Even in the city of Imola strange tales are told. About twenty years ago a groom fled frightened from the stables of the Palazzo Sforza, declaring that he had seen the apparition of an armed female warrior. This palace, the story goes, was built by Caterina in one night with the help of the devil. A large chest full of gold is supposed to exist in its recesses, and Caterina's ghost wanders through its vast halls. Sometimes she carries a lamp. If any one tries to explore its dark staircases she appears and extinguishes the light

they bear. The foundation of these legends is the more strange, as Caterina never possessed Forione, Monte Poggiolo, or Castrocaro.

Caterina was the last lay ruler of Imola and Forli. Three hundred and fifty-nine years of papal rule followed. Her arms are the last which remain without triple crown or keys, and her priestly successors have chosen to stigmatise her rule as the antithesis of their own mild and beneficent government. Little by little these arms grew to be the object of hatred and terror, and the Visconti viper, which she carried in right of her grandmother, came to be regarded as a symbol of the devil. To-day, however, all this mystery is vanishing. A more just judgment has made its way, and Caterina's memory is vindicated. When we remember the time in which she lived, we are forced to admit that her rule was, on the whole, wise and benevolent, though imperious and sometimes tyrannical. Personally she had some resemblance to that Napoleonic heroine, "Madame Sans Gêne," but she never fell below the level of the greatest ladies of her time. An interesting document given by Pasolini is a letter from Savonarola to Caterina, in answer to one of hers, which unfortunately is lost. It is dated June 18, 1497, the very day on which the friar's excommunication by Alexander VI. was published in the Church of Santo Spirito at Florence. In this letter Savonarola encourages Caterina in the hope that God will hear her prayers, and exhorts her to continuance in prayer, to justice towards her subjects, to almsgiving, and to the consideration of the shortness and misery of this present life, with promises to

¹ Similar legends are related of Giovanna of Naples.

pray to God for her without ceasing. Fragments of Caterina's own letters, addressed often to the most notable men of her time, evince her great shrewdness and keen knowledge of men and things. She writes, for instance: "It is better not to trust any living creature, because when things of importance begin to be treated, it seems as if they then came of necessity to light, and more is always said than the real truth." "No bonds can hold men who are driven to despair." "It does not seem to me honest to make contracts in matters ecclesiastical." "When preparing for war, we must get rid of words and painted horses." "With words no State can be defended." To Lorenzo de' Medici she once wrote, "*Sum prima per sentire le botte che havere paura*" ("I must first feel blows ere I am afraid"), a phrase that struck Pasolini as so characteristic of the woman that he prefixed it as a motto to his book. Whenever she wore woman's dress she was very grand and splendid in her attire, and insisted that her women should be so too. She was devoted to animals, in an age when love of animals was little known, especially fond of horses and dogs.

Caterina has had at various times biographers who have given most diverse accounts of her; but all agree in the description of her pious and repentant widowhood at Florence. She had the misfortune to live at a time when those endowed with power were of necessity led into violence; yet she always retained a strong, almost a spiritual faith. When preparing for her defence against Cesar Borgia, she writes to the nuns of the Murate, imploring their prayers in her extremity. The letter to which that of Savon-

arola is an answer must have been of the same tenor. Perhaps we cannot better close this article than by quoting, as Pasolini has done, the conclusion of the earliest biography of Caterina, written not long after her death:—

"Caterina, thus liberated from her long captivity of eighteen months, borne with the strongest patience, proceeded to Florence, where her children were, and there, welcomed and caressed by the Signory, worn out, and satiated with the affairs of this false world, she turned her ideas wholly to thoughts of a more safe and tranquil life. And as in the management of temporal rule, to the rare and unusual credit of the female sex, she was the equal of the bravest and most prudent men of that age, so when given to the Spirit and to holiness in both the active and the contemplative life, she surpassed all the examples of her time. Whence, when the course of her years was ended, it is not forbidden to a pious and Christian soul to believe that the angels received that blessed soul into the kingdom of heaven, and gave it up, purged and purified, to its Creator, where in the calm state of eternal glory it may enjoy the most blissful vision of God, the Three in One, who liveth and reigneth for ever and ever."

Certainly for her there was "light at evening time." She had borne a son who was to carry on during his brief life the noblest traditions of her heroic line, and time was given her in which to dispose as she desired of all her worldly goods. Peace to her memory! Her virtues were her own, her crimes those of her age and surroundings, and no woman certainly can reflect, without a thrill of pride, upon the fact that the only being who dared to make a stand against the resistless might of the Borgia was one of themselves, a lonely unaided widow.

HELEN ZIMMERN.

CHURCH PARADE.

EVER since the first institution of a standing army the duty of providing for the spiritual wants of soldiers has, theoretically if not always practically, been recognised in England. Up to the year 1796 a chaplain formed as much a part of the establishment of every regiment as any other officer. In the days of Charles II. the articles of war prescribed that daily prayers should be read to the soldiers, and in the Duke of Marlborough's campaigns chaplains were present and did good service. Towards the end of the last century, however, the chaplaincy of a regiment seems to have gradually degenerated into a sinecure. The chaplain bought his commission, received the salary, and when the performance of divine service was necessary, paid a substitute to officiate in his place. Soldiers on home service were either in garrison towns where a garrison chaplain was stationed, or they were in country billets, where, as they lived in the same lodgings for months together, they came under the ministrations of the parochial clergy, so that the rudimentary public duties of a regimental chaplain were provided for in time of peace. When war, however, broke out, the laxity among chaplains showed itself very markedly. When an army was sent to Flanders in 1793, only one chaplain was present with his corps, though four or five other clergymen, employed as substitutes, accompanied the force. In 1796 a very considerable body of troops was being prepared to proceed under Sir Ralph Abercromby to the West Indies, and no single chaplain presented himself. Probably this last cir-

cumstance brought about the abolition of regimental chaplains and the substitution of a department of staff chaplains under a Chaplain-General. This, however, seems to have been organised on a very incomplete and niggardly basis, and as a result the numerous armies which took the field in the beginning of the nineteenth century had little or no provision made for their spiritual wants. Sir James Craig in April 1805 embarked with 4000 men, accompanied by only one chaplain. A few months later Lord Cathcart embarked with 14,000 men, and again only one chaplain; while Sir David Baird, Sir John Moore, Sir Samuel Auchmuty, and other generals had no chaplains attached to the forces which they commanded. It must, we fear, be acknowledged that the general moral tone of the corps, which were, as we know, often completed by the sweepings of the jails and the very dregs of society, although they were drilled by an iron discipline into our incomparable fighting men, was then of the lowest, and no teachings of a better life were brought to bear upon them.

It was only in 1809, by the persistent efforts of the Duke of York, then Commander-in-Chief, that a number of chaplains were appointed, sufficient to discharge with some completeness the duties of their profession, with large detachments of troops at home and abroad. After the close of the great war epoch, however, the religious ministrations to troops came more and more into the hands of the parochial clergy, and the number of chaplains was gradually re-

duced. In 1829 the office of Chaplain-General was abolished, and the superintendence of the department fell to the senior chaplain, whose duties could not have been very onerous, as in 1843 there were only five chaplains in commission. In 1844 the miserable inadequacy of the arrangements for the religious care and instruction of the army seems to have been at last recognised by the authorities, and a new chaplains' department was organised, with the well-known Rev. G. R. Gleig as Principal Chaplain, and the office of Chaplain-General was revived in his person in 1846. Since then the department has flourished and expanded to its present establishment and vigour, the only great change in it having been made by General Peel when Secretary for War, who, in a true spirit of tolerance, added to its commissioned strength the proportion of Roman Catholic and Presbyterian clergymen, previously only paid for their services on a capitation grant.

Such has been roughly the history of the spiritual provision which in times past was made for the military forces of the Crown. It is not for us now to criticise what was done by our forefathers in such matters, but we may recognise with gratification and thankfulness that the great impulse which religious thought and observance have received in our country during the last few decades is as much visible in the country's army as anywhere else. It may now be said with confidence that no class of Englishmen is so little, continuously and necessarily, separated from the opportunities of religious impressions as England's soldiers, none has its spiritual wellbeing more carefully provided for. In every place where there is a body of troops in quarters or in the

field, provision is made that men shall not only have an opportunity of attending, but shall be made to attend, divine service. The greatest possible liberty of conscience is permitted to them, and clergymen of every form of belief are engaged by the country to minister to them particularly. There is a valuable organisation of Scripture-readers, themselves generally old soldiers, who are able to go in and out amongst them and approach them familiarly on the platform of their own personal experiences. Prayer-meetings, Bible-classes, missions, &c., are common events in all military stations; every man who is in need of a sympathetic and kindly word will surely get one, and no soldier will be allowed to lead a really dissolute life without several earnest attempts being made to wean him from it.

Let us recall some reminiscences of a tolerably long military experience which bear upon religious forms and the ministers of religion in the army.

It has been said that compulsory attendance at divine service is one of the most stringent of military regulations. Although this has always been the case, the manner in which the order is now carried out is very superior to the customs of days not so very long gone by. Thirty or forty years ago few stations where troops were quartered were provided with a decent building in which service could be held, and unless there was a parish church within reach where accommodation for the soldiers could be found, the troops were usually assembled on the ordinary parade-ground, or marched to a riding-school or some similar edifice, where, as the congregation had to stand during the whole time of their attendance, the service was of the shortest description. The reading-desk was usu-

ally formed by a pyramid of two or three drums covered with a union-jack, and an energetic clergyman has been known during his sermon, forgetting that he was not in a pulpit, to startle himself and raise a titter among his hearers by emphasising his exhortation in bringing his fist down on the topmost drum, which responded by a deep boom. Even on parades such as these, however, care was always taken that everything was done most reverently; and if respectful attention to the clergyman's words, clear enunciation of the responses, and hearty singing of the hymns, may be taken as signs of feeling, there was no lack of devotion among those present. Now, at every station where there is any number of troops quartered, there is a well-furnished chapel, or at least a chapel-school — i.e., a building which is used as a school on weekdays and as a chapel on Sundays, having one end containing communion-table, reading-desk, &c., permanently curtained off except on occasions of divine service. In all these chapels and chapel-schools there is an organ or a harmonium, but at parade services the music is generally provided by a regimental band, than which nothing can produce a finer effect in the performance of sacred melodies. The bandsmen and boys in training who are not required for the instrumental parts are also very useful as forming the nucleus of a choir, or, better still, in leading that congregational singing on the value of which so much stress is rightly laid.

The word parade service has been mentioned. This means the morning service, to which all corps in garrison are marched in full dress. But at all places where there is a military chaplain, there are besides what are called volun-

tary services, which are held in the afternoon or evening, and at which the attendance of soldiers is not compulsory. These are a great convenience and comfort to soldiers' wives and others, who, having necessary employments in the morning, have not been able to attend a parade service; and it is also remarkable what a large number of officers, non-commissioned officers, and privates are present at these voluntary services when the chaplain has fortunately been able to obtain that influence which all aim at, and many indeed succeed in gaining.

The parade services, held for the benefit of the men to whom England trusts the defence of her dearest interests—men who have to carry their lives in their hands, and are animated by the pride of long, glorious traditions—have the highest and most convincing *raison d'être*. In them the nation shows its recognition of an all-powerful supreme Being, and, as it were, repeats the old chivalrous and knightly prayer, "God defend the right." They are also no small factor in maintaining discipline and a feeling of sympathy between officers and rank and file. When Sunday by Sunday men join together in the same worship, when they kneel side by side at the same communion-table, it cannot but be that they are drawn closer together in mutual trust and confidence than if their intercourse was confined to purely temporal matters. Finally—and in this we name a fact which has been often acknowledged—young and timid lads, who not seldom have a shyness and diffidence about acknowledging a desire to pray, find a quiet opportunity when all are compelled to attend in church of making their supplications without attracting the attention of possibly thoughtless comrades.

Some years ago it used to be the custom in a good many corps, especially in cavalry regiments, to take advantage of the necessary parade for divine service to do a little drill, and to march past, &c. This custom had the merit that it saved the men from having a parade on some other day in the week. As the time of a cavalry soldier is very fully occupied by mounted drills, stables, fatigues, &c., &c., it was an undoubted relief to avoid the necessity of a parade dismounted, demanding the sacrifice of a whole afternoon; but though much could be said in favour of the practice, in many respects it was found that doing drill on church parade was objectionable, and it has now everywhere been abandoned.

It is probable that nowhere can a more orderly and well-conducted congregation be seen than at a military divine service. If the men are not paying attention, they certainly invariably have the appearance of doing so, and it is frequently the subject of remark by clergymen who, not being in the habit of officiating before soldiers, have come to do a Sunday's duty in a garrison chapel, that they never anywhere else see such earnest and intelligent faces directed towards the pulpit. Nowhere also may more bright and hearty singing be heard. It is one of the official instructions issued by the Chaplain-General that the service shall be distinctly congregational, and that all elaborate music in which the men cannot join is to be discouraged. It has been said that the bandmen who are not required to play on their instruments, and the band-boys in training, are always useful in leading the congregational singing; and if, as is generally the case, there is some one who takes an interest in the matter, it is easy

to find a certain number of men in any corps who will attend a week-day practice, and, on Sunday dispersed through the chapel, support the melody. When simple and well-known hymns are selected, by far the greater number of the men present will always join in singing them, and the volume of sound much exceeds that which is to be heard in most parish churches.

We have noted that all soldiers pay outwardly the greatest attention and conduct themselves most reverently in church, and it may possibly and plausibly be brought forward in explanation that this is perhaps a matter of discipline, as the officers and non-commissioned officers would promptly repress any laxity of demeanour. But we know from personal experience and observation how real is the attention paid in most cases, how discriminating soldiers are in estimating the value of pulpit discourses, how thoroughly they appreciate those which are sensible and to the point, and how they are wearied by platitudes and feebleness. The preaching which, to use a vulgar expression, "goes down" best with soldiers is not an ornate and rhetorical sermon, but one that is clear and earnest, however plain and even halting it may be in delivery. Brilliancy of thought and oratorical power are thoroughly appreciated, but genuine earnestness and feeling have a greater effect, and soldiers are quick to detect when these last are absent. Everybody who has served in the army for any length of time can recall to his mind some preachers who had an influence upon soldiers, and some, alas! who had none. It would be easy to enumerate men whose services, both parade and voluntary, were always eagerly attended; and, not to go too far afield for illustration, we would

cite the present Chaplain-General, who never spoke to empty pews when, as a junior in the department, he had charge of what was irreverently called the "tin tabernacle" at Aldershot; and we could name a very salient instance when a member of a local cathedral body supplied during three months the place of a military chaplain on sick-leave, and filled at voluntary services a previously very empty military chapel.

It may be remarked also that soldiers, possibly from professional association, prefer to see a strong man in the pulpit, one who has what may almost be called an "overbearing" manner. Of such a class was one of the most worthy and distinguished whilom servants of Church and State, the Rev. G. R. Gleig, once Chaplain-General, who, having fought gallantly as a combatant officer through the Peninsular and American wars, afterwards took holy orders and devoted his great powers to the spiritual wellbeing of his old comrades and their successors. We well remember how, on one occasion in winter, when he was addressing a large depôt, there was a great deal of coughing in chapel which disturbed the sermon. The venerable Chaplain-General at once assumed the air of an officer in front of a battalion and said, "Now, my lads, I'm an old man, and if you make so much noise, I can't make myself heard. Just keep quiet." The tone of command was magical in effect, and there was not a sound heard till the very practical discourse was concluded.

Outside their barracks, many soldiers are great church-goers, and it is probable that a larger percentage of them attend places of worship in the towns where they are quartered than of any other young men of their own age in the population. In a cer-

tain cathedral town the number of soldiers attending the evening service in the cathedral was at one time always counted, and generally amounted to between 100 and 150. In the other churches in the town, especially in the Wesleyan and Presbyterian chapels, there were also at the same hour always many soldiers among the worshippers, so that the total number of soldiers at an evening service outside barracks on any given Sunday was certainly not less than 200. The total strength of the garrison would be about 1800; so when the numbers of men in hospital, employed in various ways, on guard or on leave to see friends at a distance, besides those who attended the garrison chapel voluntary service, were deducted, it may be realised what a large proportion went to church in the evening from choice after having attended a parade service earlier in the day.

It must not be supposed that we would claim for all soldiers a very high state of religious feeling. We would only insist that practically they are as much concerned about matters which relate to their higher interests as any other class of the community, and that religious observance, with all its vast possibility of benefit, has a very marked part in a military life. It must in all fairness be acknowledged that many men in the ranks have little sense of religion, and treat things sacred in, to say the least, a very lax way. We may quote an instance or two to show what we mean, which do not involve any great moral depravity, but are examples of feelings which are probably as common among civilians as among men wearing her Majesty's uniform. When a man is enlisted he has to give certain information about himself, and among other questions to which

he has to give an answer, he is invited to declare to what religion or denomination he belongs. In all the records concerning the man the entry is then carefully made, "Church of England," "Roman Catholic," "Wesleyan," or "Presbyterian"; and it is always provided subsequently that he attends divine service with the other soldiers of the same form of faith as himself, and that he has all facilities as regards special occasions in his particular communion. If in the future a man finds that an error has been made in classing him under a form of faith not his own, or if for well-grounded reasons he wishes to change from being, say, a Wesleyan to being a member of the Church of England, he can make application to his commanding officer, who, if satisfied that the application is justified, will make the necessary alteration in all records. But at particular stations it may accidentally be much more convenient for a private soldier to attend the divine service parade of one denomination rather than another. Possibly, if he is a Presbyterian, he may have to turn out very early, before he has had time to bolt his breakfast, and then to march a mile or two along muddy ways, to a long and somewhat tedious service; while his Church of England comrades parade much later, march to a chapel close at hand, and are dismissed to their barrack-rooms and the joys of a quiet pipe much sooner. At such a station it is remarkable how large a number of men—principally, of course, among those lately enlisted—send in applications to what is called "change their religion" from Presbyterianism to Church of England, and a commanding officer is frequently very much puzzled to know whether he should accede to these applications or not. A man's religious

convictions are very delicate matters to deal with, and whatever the commanding officer may suspect about the motives of the applicants, he is very loath to refuse the request, which may be made from purely conscientious reasons. We remember a certain colonel who found himself in this predicament at a station where a large number of Church of England men one after another applied to be registered as Wesleyans. He had every reason to believe that the Wesleyan service parade was much more convenient for the men than that of the Church of England, but he got over the difficulty by saying that he would allow no man to change his religion unless the applicant produced certificates from the clergyman of the persuasion which he wanted to leave and of that which he wanted to join, saying that they had discussed his religious scruples with him and were each satisfied that he was acting from conviction. No further applications were then made to change religion.

A story is told of a private soldier who applied to change from Church of England to Wesleyan, and on being asked for his reasons, said that he "objected to the forms." His commanding officer naturally understood that the man meant the forms in which the service was conducted, and asked what forms he principally objected to. It then came out that the forms of worship were not in any way distasteful, but that the man disliked the Sunday fatigue duty, which fell upon all Church of England soldiers, of carrying the barrack-room forms into the building temporarily used for service, and then carrying them back again when they had done their duty as pews.

Again, at a large Indian station

several men were from time to time on a certain day in each recurring week late for watch-setting roll-call, and were in consequence brought to the orderly-room next day to answer for the irregularity. The excuse was given that they were in the habit of attending a weekly meeting of a certain Christian body, and that this meeting was sometimes accidentally late in breaking up. The colonel asked what were the characteristics of the meeting, and the reply of one of the culprits was, "Tea and hymns, sir." The stern old regimental sergeant-major, who was standing by at strict attention, could not help muttering in a sufficiently audible voice, "Tea and hymns indeed! Much more likely tea and hers." The ladies of the congregation no doubt had done much to add attraction to the religious meetings in question, and special consideration was not unnaturally extended to the absentees from roll-call.

Of all occasions of divine service for troops none appears to us more conducive to deep and sincere feeling than that on board a transport at sea, on the way either to a prolonged term of foreign service or to the stern duties of a campaign. The thought of the home country which has been quitted, the isolation on the wide waste of waters, and the certainty that some at least will make no return voyage, cannot fail to affect in some degree even the most thoughtless. We well remember how impressive and touching was the service held years ago on board a ship hurrying from England under all steam with troops which were about to take part in one of our small wars. The whole of a very distinguished Highland regiment was on board, and besides it, a general with twenty or thirty other officers were passengers. The Highlanders were

of course almost all Presbyterians, and a Presbyterian minister was accompanying them to the field. The service was therefore conducted according to the form of the Established Church of Scotland, and the strains of the Old Hundredth rose from the crowded deck, stirring up memories of the dearly-loved native land which some were destined never again to see. The eyes of many stalwart lads were dim,—eyes that a few days later looked death steadily and defiantly in the face. As it happened, the general and by far the greater number of the officers on board were Scotsmen, and under the circumstances no other service could have appealed to each one personally with greater force. The minister was a singularly earnest and eloquent preacher whose every word went home. In his closing prayer he spoke for all in imploring the Almighty and All-merciful to shield his hearers where they were going, and to give them strength to do their duty. He spoke of that Scotland which would watch their steps, and prayed that they might be worthy of their land by acting as Christian men in an uncivilised and savage country. He prayed for friends and relatives in distant parishes in glen and lowland, and that all those present might return in safety to enjoy the blessings of peace. When he had finished there was an involuntary pause of silence, only broken by the steady clank and throb of the engines and the swish of the waves as the great ship ploughed on its course. At last the quick sharp word of command came from the colonel which sent the battalion tramping to its quarters forward, while the officers gathered in groups on the quarter-deck, all making remarks on the service in which they had just taken part. A very gallant and distinguished officer, one of the few

Englishmen on board, could not help adding, however, "Yes; but confound the parson! Does he think that no one has a soul to be saved but a Scotsman?" It perhaps had not before occurred either to the minister or most of his congregation that the service had had so specifically Scottish a character.

In mentioning a Highland regiment, we cannot help remarking the deep and special religious tone distinguishing, in the old days at any rate before they had lost their distinctively national character, so many men in the kilted corps which have done so much for the honour of their native land. The pious lessons taught in many a humble home, where the "Book" was reverently produced morning and evening, bore fruit in after life in the reckless laddie who "went for a soldier." Nowhere have we seen this tone better or more clearly illustrated than in the very powerful and interesting 'Reminiscences of the Great Mutiny,' by William Forbes Mitchell, late sergeant 93d Sutherland Highlanders. There, talking of his regiment, the author says:—

"They were a military Highland parish, minister and elders complete. The elders were selected from among the men of all ranks—two sergeants, two corporals, and two privates; and I believe it was the only regiment in the army which had a regular service of communion plate; and in time of peace the Holy Communion according to the Church of Scotland was administered by the regimental chaplain twice a-year. I hope the young second battalion of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders are like the old 93d in this respect."¹

Could any more satisfactory state

of things be imagined, in a religious, a national, or a military point of view, than the case of this grand enrolled Highland parish?

That the duties of religion in the Queen's army are no outside matters, but a real and integral phase of military life, is proved by the active part which all ranks take in public worship. We have seen that regimental bands furnish sacred music, and that men and boys sing psalm and hymn with heartiest strain; but it may be new to many people to know that in a great number of chapels, and at many parade and voluntary services, generals and other officers relieve the chaplains by reading the lessons for the day, thus very markedly and solemnly identifying themselves with the service of God, and giving all the weight of their position to the maintenance of due reverence and attention. *Contretemps* have, however, been known to occur to officers who, with the best will in the world, have found themselves in the unaccustomed position of standing before a lectern, and it has not always been easy for them to modulate their voices so as to fill the building and no more or less. We call to mind, too, the discomfiture of a commanding officer, who, having read, as he believed, the proper lessons, was "given away" innocently by the chaplain. A very striking text was given out for the sermon, "to be found in the first lesson of this morning's service." As all the congregation who had paid any attention at all could not fail to remark that that text had not previously

¹ We understand that in the present second battalion of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders the old parish constitution is, very regrettably, no longer maintained. The old communion plate is, however, carefully preserved in the Sergeants' Mess as a memento of regimental customs now unfortunately disused.

been read to them, there was some subsequent chaff about the colonel's failure to find the lessons according to the Prayer Book's directions. A somewhat similar awkwardness was also experienced by a friend of the writer, whose duty it was to read the service on one Christmas Day during a campaign in a distant land, when, having begun the morning prayer, it suddenly occurred to him that he had not looked out the proper psalms for the day. He nudged his subaltern and asked him what they were. "Don't know," was the reply. "Look in the beginning of the Prayer Book." The service went on, and a despairing whisper came, "I can't find them anywhere." There was a long pause, much consultation, and prolonged turning over of leaves before the two officers could solve the difficulty satisfactorily.

Many situations occur in the course of military life in which the services of an ordained clergyman are not available, and it then becomes the duty of the officer in command to provide that some form of service is held. On detachment, on the line of march, in the field before the enemy, the prayers of the Church of England are always read, and never are they more devoutly followed than in such circumstances. Nothing, for example, can be more touching than the unarmy funeral when a comrade who has died of disease or has fallen in action is laid in his last resting-place by the sorrowing care of those with whom he has served. "Few and short" may be the prayers that are said, but they are breathed with the deepest feeling by those who know that their own end also may soon be approaching.

It is somewhat remarkable that while there are special prayers in our Liturgy for the use of the Royal

Navy, to be said daily and before a fight at sea, there is no similar provision made for the army. This is accounted for by Mr Clode, who says that "the prayers for the use of the navy were inserted at the last revision of the Liturgy; and, looking at the feeling of all classes of the people towards the army at that period (1662), it need not be a matter of surprise that the clergy did not see fit to recognise the military forces of the Crown as 'the chief visible strength' of the kingdom." Our army can never be of the same importance to the nation as the Royal Navy, but it fills to-day a sufficiently large place in England's esteem to entitle it to have the old intentional oversight rectified. The German army, complete in this matter as in all others, is provided with a special soldiers' prayer-book containing suitable forms of words for all emergencies. Why should not something similar be compiled for this country's land-forces, so that when vague thoughts of supplication rise to a man's mind in positions of peril or anxiety, he may have words in which to express them in company and in sympathy with his comrades? Brave old Sir Jacob Astley no doubt gave apt voice to the feelings of many of his infantry when he fell on his knees before the battle of Edge Hill and said, "O Lord, Thou knowest how busy I must be this day. If I forget Thee, do not Thou forget me." The old Dessauer's prayer before the battle of Kesselsdorf was even more expressive. As Carlyle tells, "He reverently doffs his hat, as had always been his wont, in prayer to God, before going in. A grim fervour of prayer is in his heart, doubtless, though the words as reported are not very regular or orthodox: '*Oh Herr Gott*, help me yet this once; let me not be

disgraced in my old days! Or if Thou wilt not help me, don't help those *Hundswögte*!" (damned scoundrels, so to speak), "'but leave us to try it ourselves'!"

No ministers of God have anywhere a nobler, wider, or more interesting field of usefulness than the chaplains of the British army. It is admirably defined in an 'Address to the Chaplains of the Army' by the present Chaplain-General, Dr Edghill:—

"The system of short service causes a rapid interchange between the civil and military members of our Church. Men come into the army and are trained, and after a few years return to their homes, carrying with them the good and evil which have been sown or developed while they have been under our care. These men generally have been but little touched by the Church or brought in contact with her ministers; hence the army is one of the grandest fields for home mission work. If we can influence these men for good, so that they return to civil life with 'new thoughts of God, new hopes of heaven,' prepared to take their place as citizens and churchmen with greater knowledge and deeper conscientiousness, we shall have done good work for the Church and commonwealth. Among such men, in such surroundings, our duty lies. It is a position of no common difficulty. The work is peculiar; it has its special dangers, its special requisites; it is one long continued mission, for men are ever coming and going, so that we have continually to begin afresh; it is a succession of new starts needing no ordinary powers of body and mind."

Responsible and difficult as the position of an army chaplain may be, however, in many ways it has numerous features which render it a field of work particularly desirable for an energetic and enthusiastic man. The chaplain has, as it were, his parish in a ring-fence, and he has every possible facility afforded to him for doing his duty in the completest way. Church,

hospital, school, married quarters, are all generally within a very short distance of each other, and no time need be wasted in moving from place to place. Wherever he goes, he has the prestige of her Majesty's commission, which ensures him a respectful hearing, a strong foundation for personal influence, and paves the way for any special exertion which he may wish to make. The men and, for the most part, the women with whom he has to deal are above the general average in intelligence, and have had that intelligence strengthened by the circumstances of their lives, which have shown them many lands and many varying conditions of existence. The chaplain will generally have much to do with any military philanthropic and charitable institutions in his station, and in looking after them he will never be cramped for means, for the officers are at any rate open-handed and ready to assist in any good work. In his duties among women and children, in mothers' meetings, needlework associations, Sunday-schools, &c., he will always easily secure many willing helpers among the officers' families, and in every corps he will find existing organisations for the benefit of those dependent upon it, which should be to him of the greatest assistance.

So much for what may be called parochial work; and what can be said in too high terms of his opportunities in the pulpit? The chaplain is never condemned to preach to a sparse or dull congregation. He has always as a stimulant the electric power of a crowd of men all in the prime of life and the vigour of intelligence. If he has any message to give, if he himself feels deeply and earnestly the truths which he has to teach, he will surely reach the hearts of some, perhaps of many, among his

hearers. And what influences he has at his disposal besides those which are given to every preacher ! He is speaking to men all belonging to one profession, all more or less moved by the same feelings, all bound together by comradeship and mutual confidence, all the inheritors of great, glorious traditions of duty accomplished, of courage, endurance, and self-sacrifice. How can he fail to be inspired himself, and, being so, to inspire others ? And a chaplain, if he is a man who knows men, may not infrequently be able to make himself a most valuable factor in maintaining soldierly feeling and discipline among the hot-blooded and impatient lads with whom he is brought in contact, by putting their duties before them on a higher ground than the Mutiny Act and the Queen's Regulations. He knows, or ought to know, something of the many circumstances, often unavoidable, which cause irritation and ill-blood in a soldier's life, and, without interfering or going beyond his proper sphere, can give a word of advice or warning which may save much unpleasantness and friction. We could name one instance, at any rate, in which a chaplain, knowing from private sources that a certain amount of grave discontent existed in a particular corps,—discontent that might have culminated in deplorable breaches of discipline,—took occasion to speak in such a manner from the pulpit as to soothe and repress dissatisfaction and threatened insubordination ; and this he had the singular tact to accomplish without allowing it to be detected that he had a special reason for the gist of his sermon. It is only fair to say, however, that such an exhibition of power for good could be expected from few men, nor is it desirable that attempts of the

kind should often be made. The chaplain whose words had so good an effect in the case to which we refer was a man of peculiar qualifications, long experience, predominant influence, and most marked discretion.

We have glanced most superficially at the position, work, difficulties, and opportunities of an army chaplain in time of peace. There is something yet to be said of what chaplains have done and may do in time of war. Though, of course, the place of chaplains attached to an army in the field is generally removed from the fighting line, in fulfilling the duties and performing the ministrations of their office, they are not infrequently called upon to show their manhood in the extremest perils and the most critical situations of war ; and whenever this has happened, they have ever borne themselves with the highest honour, and have set an example of courage, coolness, and self-devotion worthy of their sacred profession. The records in the Official Army List tell how many of them have been called upon to go on active service, and of these how many have been honourably mentioned in despatches.

And here let us recall the story of a seventeenth-century chaplain, which is recorded for us by the great Sir Walter. It savours perhaps more of the fighting spirit shown in a ruder age by the valiant bishops and abbots, who fell with all of Scotland's noblest in the "grim and ghastly wall" circling a loved king at Flodden, than of the meeker and more sedate characteristics looked for in modern clergymen. But its hero was Adam Fergusson, afterwards Professor of History in the University of Edinburgh, and author of a once popular history of the Roman

Republic. In his youth he was chaplain of the Black Watch, and with it was present at Fontenoy. When the regiment was advancing into action, Sir Robert Munro, the colonel, noticed his chaplain at the head of the column with a drawn broadsword in his hand, and ordered him to the rear with the doctors. Fergusson refused, and when the colonel, in the altercation which ensued, threatened to have his commission cancelled, replied, "D—n my commission." Then charging at the head of his flock, he fought like a gallant Scotsman during the bloody fray. We doubt not that the stout Munro forgave his insubordination for the sake of his valorous example, and that the stern old Presbyterians in the ranks would appreciate his subsequent ministrations none the less that they had seen him in time of trial play the man in their midst.

Who that served in Afghanistan can fail to remember one who was loved and revered by all ranks, "Parson Adams," gentlest and bravest of men? In the annals of heroes who have gained the plain bronze cross "for Valour" no record is more thrilling than that which tells how the unarmed chaplain (for he never would carry arms of any sort, as he did not think that doing so became his profession) gave up his own horse to a wounded and dismounted soldier, whom he had snatched from the Afghan knives thirsting for blood, and made his own way to safety on foot as best he could. The service of the Queen is the poorer that the Rev. J. W. Adams has left the army; but he carries with him into a quieter sphere of duty the affectionate remembrance of many old comrades, whom he has comforted by his words and inspired by his example.

Of the small and noble band of Englishmen who stood steadfastly behind the feeble fortifications at Rorke's Drift, and by their gallant conduct threw a gleam of hope and confidence over South Africa at a time of grave disaster, none more distinguished himself than the Rev. George Smith. A missionary chaplain in Natal, he had been temporarily attached to the army for the period of the campaign, and was posted at the base hospital. During the whole of the long and fierce Zulu attack, right gallantly he played his part in tending the sick, giving aid to the wounded, and comforting the dying. No one had a greater share of danger than he, and no one showed a more soldierly example of treating that danger with calm indifference. Not only did he perform the duties of his office, but, as every man who could handle a rifle was sorely needed to defend the parapet, Mr Smith did essential service by going round the various posts and distributing reserve cartridges. He will, we trust, pardon us if we repeat here a story which went round the army of South Africa, bearing on the warrior spirit of his professional conduct on the occasion. One of the men, in the heat and excitement of battle, was cursing his enemies and using the most profane language. The chaplain, coming behind, heard his words and said, "You should not speak like that, my friend. Don't curse them," then, shoving a packet of cartridges into his hand, "Shoot them, shoot them!" Among the rewards given for the action at Rorke's Drift, Mr Smith was appointed a military chaplain, and British soldiers can never hope to have with them in time of trial stauncher or better men than he. He is still in the army,

and since the colonial war which led to his first commission he has served through three campaigns in Egypt, receiving honourable mention in despatches for his conduct.

At the fatal field of Laing's Nek, where Sir George Colley's force suffered such heavy losses, that most unfortunate general was for some time in want of a staff-officer to carry his orders. The Rev. Mr Ritchie happened to be present mounted, and volunteered for the dangerous duty, braving the deadly Boer rifles and riding through the heart of the combat with the collected coolness of a gallant soldier. Alas! he never really recovered from the strain of African service, and died in an English garrison some years ago.

Nor have chaplains only distinguished themselves where bullets are flying, where the hot affray stirs the pulse, and the observation of admiring comrades may have its effect in stimulating to acts of daring. Far more often they face death in the close wards of a pest-stricken hospital, in a silence only broken by the groan of agony, or the spasmodic rattle in the throat of the dying. There, where, as he enters, the heart of the strong man waxes faint, and the flapping of Death's wings may almost be heard by the strained ear of the watcher, is the chaplain's true field of glory; there will he gather laurels which no earthly eye may see on his brow, and gain such victories as will be saluted by the blast of no earthly trumpet. There his voice gives courage to the trembling soul passing down to the Valley of the Shadow of Death. There it is his privilege to say those words which, even at the close of the eleventh hour, may bring a man to his Master. Those who know our army chaplains in peace and

war, know well how forward they are in undertaking these hospital duties, and how freely they place themselves in the midst of the most virulent disease, if only they may soothe, console, encourage the sufferers, whose very touch is almost certain infection.

The chaplains of all denominations have at all times thus signalled themselves wherever the British flag has been unfurled, but old Crimean officers still especially remember with the deepest admiration the self-devotion of Father Strickland, who was serving with our army as Roman Catholic chaplain, and, when he heard that in the French hospitals an epidemic of deadly fever was raging, threw up his appointment in order to betake himself to the scene where was the greatest need of his ministrations. No cooler act of heroism was ever performed, and when he himself was, as he had surely foreseen, swept away by the fever, he might claim in the fullest sense to have died as an English officer and a Christian gentleman with his face to the foe.

With such a field as is open for the exercise of the highest qualities to chaplains in the army, can we wonder that many of the most able and earnest men who take orders seek eagerly for commissions? We believe that the Chaplain-General holds in his hand more applications from the most desirable men than can possibly be satisfied. That those who are now in the army have justified the selection which has placed them in their positions of labour and trust, is amply proved not only by the general consensus of official reports and private opinion, but by the mute testimony of the great and holy work which they have done and are doing.

AN UNCROWNED KING.¹

CHAPTER XIII.—PUNIC FAITH.

MATTERS came to a crisis one dreadful evening when the Prince of Dardania, who was staying at one of his palaces a short distance across the frontier, dined at the castle, an invitation having been sent him, with what the King congratulated himself was a refinement of cruelty, that he might see with his own eyes how complete was the ruin of his hopes. Whether from malice or from nervousness, Princess Ottilie overacted her part enormously that night, insomuch that she awakened doubts even in the mind of Prince Alexis, and thrilled Caerleon with a new horror. Perhaps she had changed her mind, and would after all refuse to release him,—and what was he to do then? It comforted him to see that the Queen managed to say a few whispered words to the Prince, as he took his leave after an evening of coldness and snubbing, but he himself had an account to settle with Princess Ottilie. The next morning the pair had "words" in the conservatory, and Caerleon informed his *fiancée* succinctly that he did not intend to be used as an instrument of torture with which to torment Prince Alexis.

"If you try it on again, I shall simply tell the whole thing," he said.

"You threaten me?" wept the Princess.

"Not if you behave yourself," he answered, with a roughness which only his desperate situation could excuse; "but if a man is supposed to be engaged, he has a right to take some notice of the conduct of his—of the lady. The fact is, you

think you can go as far as you like with me, and I won't have it. You wouldn't dare to carry on in this way with my brother Cyril, or any other man, because you know he might respond, and then you would get into trouble. But as I consider myself virtually engaged to some one else, and was soft-hearted enough to believe what you told me in the forest, you think you can make a fool of me as much as you like; but I won't stand it."

"You are brutal," sobbed Princess Ottilie. "As you say, any other man would feel honoured to be treated in the way I treat you."

"Let him," said Caerleon. "I don't; and I don't like it."

"You are a monster to tell me so, at any rate," she said, drying her eyes. "Now that you have delivered your lecture, and I have listened, I will only tell you one thing, that I would never allow my prince to speak to me as you have done."

This was her only expression of penitence, and even this Caerleon understood to be intended more as a hit; nor did his lecture seem to have had much effect, for when later in the day Cyril, on finding Princess Ottilie alone, remarked on the heaviness of her eyes, and hoped that it was not due to a headache, she told him frankly that she had been crying, and gave him to understand that her tears were due to a doubt whether Caerleon really cared for her. A good deal of flattery and diplomacy was needed to soothe her apprehensions, and when Cyril had left her, with his mind made

¹ Copyright in the United States.

up to seek Caerleon and warn him to be more careful, he found himself seized upon by the King, who was also of opinion that something was wrong. Why did Caerleon look so unhappy? and why had he made the Princess cry that morning? were his unanswerable questions; and although Cyril, with what he told himself was perfect truth, urged that he could not imagine any reason why his brother, after declaring so emphatically in favour of love-marriages, should engage himself to the Princess unless he wished to do so, he was obliged to fall back on Caerleon's supposed unworthiness and low opinion of himself as an explanation. He felt that the King was only half satisfied, and the next day he perceived that this uneasiness was distinctly inopportune.

Hosts and guests alike at Schloss Herzensruh breakfasted in their own rooms, and it was immediately after this early meal that Cyril received an intimation that the King desired his attendance as soon as possible. The message struck him as peculiar; but he finished his dressing in a hurry, and presented himself in the study. To his astonishment, he found King Johann surrounded by piles of newspapers bearing English stamps, which had just arrived by post. Several of them had been opened, and Cyril was surprised to see that each was a copy of that well-known weekly, 'Mendacity,' dated two or three days back. Furthermore, on looking at those still unopened, he recognised in each case the cover of 'Mendacity.'

"Lord Cyril," said the King, and Cyril was surprised to see that the fussy little man could look really kingly, "I have sent for you because all the arrangements as to my daughter's engagement have been conducted through you, and also because I was anxious not to trouble

your brother if this matter is capable of explanation. You see these papers? I think every one of my English friends has sent me a copy, and the same paragraph is marked in each. Perhaps you will kindly read it."

He put one of the papers into Cyril's hand, and he read the marked paragraph:—

"I have no desire to be counted among the "unco guid," and it has always been my opinion that young men will be young men. Still, I am not sorry that my Temperance friends should have a chance of learning the true character of the young Lothario whom the criminal inertness of a Tory Government has permitted to establish himself on the throne of Thracia. We have heard a good deal lately of the superior morality of this gentleman. His people have all been made sober—not by Act of Parliament, but by his "royal" decree; he has sacrificed a large part of his income for the purpose of acquiring licences, and he is about to put the finishing touch to his catalogue of virtues by making a love-match with the wealthy and beautiful daughter of a neighbouring sovereign. Perhaps it will be news to some of my readers to learn that this so-called "King" is bound by every tie of honour to marry a Scythian lady of noble family, whose acquaintance he made before seizing the throne, and whom he subsequently deserted in the most heartless manner, and under circumstances of peculiar cruelty. What does the Nonconformist conscience say to this? Scythia has a long account already outstanding against this worthy scion of the British aristocracy, and when the day of reckoning comes, the swords of her soldiers will not leap from their scabbards with any less alacrity for the remembrance

of his treatment of their country-woman."

The time necessary for reading the paragraph through afforded Cyril a chance to collect his thoughts, for he had guessed its drift from the very first sentences. Now he threw down the paper and cried hotly—

"I hope to goodness Caerleon has not seen this! If he has, he will simply go off to Scythia immediately, and marry the girl whether she will or not."

"Then the story is true?" shouted the King, half rising from his chair, the veins in his forehead swelling.

"Like most lies, it has a substratum of truth," answered Cyril, coolly.

"Be good enough to explain to me exactly what you mean," said the King, his fury partially disarmed by the young man's calmness.

"It is very simple," returned Cyril. "During our tour in Hungary, we made the acquaintance of a Scythian officer and his family. The only daughter was a most estimable young lady, and my brother fell deeply in love with her. I suppose his affection was not returned—at any rate, when he proposed to her, she refused him. That's all, unless she has changed her mind by this time."

"And you can assure me, on your honour as a nobleman, that this is the only foundation for this—this tale?"

Cyril drew himself up. "I have not the honour to understand your Majesty. Is it possible you can for a moment have believed the story true?"

"There was some justification for my belief, in this printed paper and in the anxiety of my English friends," said the King, dryly.

"If that is the case, I think your Majesty has shown pretty plainly that the marriage between my brother and the Princess is not to your liking," said Cyril, with awful coldness. "If your Majesty will permit me, I will communicate the fact to him, and we will leave the castle at once."

"No, no! you are too hasty," said King Johann, quickly. "It is surely only natural that I should resent such an aspersion on the character of my future son-in-law. Surely, too, I may complain of a want of openness on your part. Why have I heard nothing of this prior attachment?"

"One is not very anxious to publish it abroad that one's brother has made a fool of himself," said Cyril, frankly. "I don't mind confessing that I was glad to hush the matter up. But Caerleon insisted on telling the Princess all about it, and I know he did so before their engagement took place. No doubt that is one reason for his looking so seedy lately. Of course he felt that it wasn't quite fair for a man with an experience of that kind fresh in his mind to make love to a whole-hearted, unworldly young girl like her Royal Highness."

This was carrying the war into the enemy's camp with a vengeance, and the King climbed down from his high horse in some confusion.

"I do not complain so much of the concealment of the affair from myself, as of the fact that others have been allowed to become acquainted with it," he said, wisely waiving the question of Princess Ottilie's inexperience in affairs of the heart. Cyril made no remark, but accepted the words as confirmation of a suspicion which had occurred to him once or twice, that King Johann's ignorance was mere-

ly official, and that he had all along been aware of Nadia's existence, although he had acquiesced discreetly in the silence hitherto maintained with regard to her. "How do you suppose that the news reached England?" the King went on.

"From a Scythian source, no doubt," answered Cyril, promptly. "Dickinson, the editor of 'Mendacity,' collects the scandals of all nations for his wretched rag. I suppose you have no Scythian newspaper of last week?"

"I remember now that one was sent me. It is evident that I have not so many kind friends in Scythia as in England. I put it on one side, for I do not myself read Scythian easily; and I thought—the Queen—about this marriage—things might be said——"

"As things stand, it is a very good thing you did not," said Cyril, answering the thought rather than the words. "Her Majesty might have misunderstood the whole affair. We all know that ladies often take strong prejudices, unfortunately."

"Can you read it, and see what it says?" suggested the King.

"I don't know much Scythian, but I might be able to puzzle it out," said Cyril; and the King brought out a crumpled paper, which the two studied painfully for some minutes.

"Ah, here it is!" cried Cyril, and he began to translate rapidly and freely: "'The Carlino-O'Malachy affair, of which so much has lately been heard in society, seems likely to have far-reaching consequences.' Then there comes pretty much what we have just read in 'Mendacity.' Then it goes on: 'With a view to obtaining authoritative information on the subject, a representative of this journal called yesterday upon Colonel O'Malachy, who was paying a flying visit to

the city, and left this morning. Colonel O'Malachy is a veteran soldier, wearing a medal for distinguished services, and the order of the Byzantine Empire. He has served in——' oh, that doesn't signify. 'The gallant officer maintained a strict reserve, but admitted that the published accounts of the Thracian usurper's conduct are substantially true. The publicity which had been given to the matter was, however, quite contrary to his wishes and those of his family, for it was not, he said, the custom of a house which numbered kings among its ancestors to submit its wrongs to the arbitrament of a court either of law or of public opinion. Let but an appeal be made to arms, and he would trust to meet the usurper face to face on his own ground, and to sheathe the sword, which had drunk Moslem blood in '77, in his treacherous heart.'"

"That conclusion is rather fine," observed Cyril. "I always knew that the O'Malachy was about as picturesque an old villain as remains unhung in these degenerate days; but I did not know he was quite capable of this."

"Perhaps a telegram which I received before you came in may throw some light upon the subject," said the King. "It is from our Minister at Pavelsburg, telling me that this very paper had been warned by the censor for publishing unauthorised news. He added that the news related to the King of Thracia."

"Only warned? not suspended?" said Cyril. "That shows they were not sorry to have it believed. Well, I fear we can do nothing in Scythia; but I think I can put a spoke in Dickinson's wheel."

"I will complain to the British Government," said the King. "It is intolerable that a newspaper

should be allowed to libel in this way a neighbouring sovereign, and one, moreover, who will soon be so closely connected with my family."

"I'm afraid that will scarcely do," said Cyril. "You see, for one thing, Caerleon isn't exactly a neighbouring sovereign—at least, no one quite knows whether he is a sovereign at all, or not."

"But that will soon be satisfactorily settled," said the King.

"If Pannonia supports us at Czarigrad in pressing anew for our recognition from Roum," said Cyril, shortly. "But this disposes of any idea of appealing to the British Government. What we have to do is to work upon Dickinson in a way he can understand."

"And what is that?" asked King Johann.

"I know a man on the staff of the 'Universe,'" answered Cyril, "and it will give him and his chief the purest pleasure to make Dickinson sit up over this business. I shall simply send him one little fact, and he will work it up with a few flourishes about Dickinson's usual faculty for discovering mares' nests, and a passing remark or two about his descent from the man who hated Aristides."

"But what is the fact?" asked the King, eagerly.

"Merely this, that the brother of the much-injured lady is still an officer in my brother's guard, and dined at our table, quite in a friendly spirit, the night before we left Bellaviste. If the O'Malachy had any sense of dramatic consistency, he would have ordered him to resign; but as he hasn't, we are all right."

"But a mere demonstration of the absurdity of his accusation will not affect this Dickinson," said the King.

"Oh yes, it will. The very sug-

gestion that he has taken up such a ridiculous story will be a sufficient punishment for him."

"But he cannot care about the truth, if the aim of his journal is to circulate lies," objected the King.

"He cares very much about his reputation as a shrewd man of the world," said Cyril. "And you mustn't judge his paper from its name. That is Dickinson's little joke. He calls it 'Mendacity' on the *lucus a non lucendo* principle, from a theory of his that the name is intended to tell what the paper is not. The 'Times,' he says, is behind the times; the 'Standard' lags in the rear, instead of leading; and so with his paper—in each case the contents contradict the name. But some people think that there is more truth in the title than anywhere inside the cover."

"So it would seem," said the King.

"We are rather proud of Dickinson," Cyril went on. "He is a purely English product, and *fin de siècle* at that. No other nation can rival his peculiar humour." The King looked as though he, at any rate, found it difficult also to appreciate the bent of Mr Dickinson's genius. "But the 'Universe' will have him on toast now with a vengeance," continued Cyril, cheerfully. "I suppose we may consider this little affair agreeably settled, your Majesty? Perhaps I may remark that the sooner our application at Czarigrad is favourably considered, the easier we shall find it to deal with cases of this kind."

"Naturally," said the King, "it was understood, before I took any steps whatever about the marriage between my daughter and your brother, that Pannonia would set about securing the recognition of your rights from Roum at once."

This was a most satisfactory assurance, and Cyril went away well

pleased. The morrow was the day fixed for the betrothal, a ceremony which, in accordance with German ideas, would be almost as irrevocable as marriage itself; and it struck him that the Emperor of Pannonia would probably consider it a graceful and friendly act to begin, immediately on its completion, to press the claims of Thracia on the Roumi Government, in order to obtain Caerleon's recognition by the suzerain Power as a kind of wedding-gift to the bridal pair. All seemed to be going well with Cyril's schemes, and he prepared with a light heart for his departure from Schloss Herzensruh. It was considered proper that the King of Thracia should arrive on Moesian soil from his own territory on the morning of the betrothal, and the brothers were therefore to return to their shooting-box for the night. Caerleon's state of mind was a pitiable one. The time fixed for his penance had all but dragged out its appointed course, and yet he could not obtain his release. What was he to do if it did not come during the one day that was left? Take upon himself the solemn vows of betrothal he was resolved that he would not; but how was he to refuse to do so without either insulting Princess Ottilie or betraying her secret? It is half absurd, half humiliating, to be obliged to confess it, but the idea of flight presented itself to him more than once in tempting colours.

The first promise of relief came to him at the mid-day meal, which might be considered either a late breakfast or an early lunch, and at which Princess Ottilie did not appear. She was ill, her mother said, and had decided to remain in her room for the day; and she herself sent a special message to the effect that her illness was caused by grief regarding the anxiously expected Paris dress, which had indeed ar-

rived, but was horribly cut, and made her look hideous. King Johann received the excuse with some seriousness, and remarked that his daughter had an undisciplined mind, and he hoped that Caerleon would teach her to be less excitable when they were married; but it was evident that he regarded the cause of the illness as amply sufficient, and Caerleon recalled with a little amusement the Princess's words in the forest. He could afford to be amused now, for he guessed that Princess Ottilie intended to urge her indisposition on the morrow as a reason for postponing the betrothal; and, although the means were not such as he would have chosen, he was so nearly desperate as to be ready to snatch at any prospect of escape. Hence he also was able to leave the castle cheerfully, and even to stand with patience Cyril's chaff as they rode through the forest, although it concerned principally engagement rings and loss of bachelor freedom, and similar well-worn and appropriate themes.

The afternoon passed quickly, in its unwonted freedom from the Princess's rather exacting society, and with the dusk arrived M. Drakovics, who had journeyed from Bellaviste expressly for the purpose of attending the betrothal ceremony. Much to Caerleon's relief, he made no pretence of congratulation, and exhibited no special interest in the event of the morrow; but immediately after dinner produced a vast pile of reports and returns on the subject of the new liquor laws, and invited the King to go through them with him. Caerleon was only too glad of any work that promised to distract his mind from the gnawing anxiety which attacked him whenever he reflected that perhaps Princess Ottilie would not be able to carry out her plan after all, and he

plunged into the mass of papers with avidity. With Cyril it was otherwise. He was consumed by an intense restlessness, a haunting fear lest some unforeseen catastrophe should interfere with his schemes just as they were on the point of realisation; and he wandered from room to room, pausing now and then to finger the documents which the other two were perusing so strenuously.

"What's up, Cyril? Anything wrong?" asked Caerleon.

"Only the fidgets, as old nurse used to say when I was a kid. I'm as much excited as if I was going to be betrothed to-morrow instead of you. I can't keep quiet, I think I shall go for a walk."

"Now? at this time of night?"

"Rather. I feel as if I had an inexhaustible fund of energy. By the bye, have those rubies arrived?"

"Yes. Wright went to fetch them from the town this afternoon. He was just in time to meet the Vienna express."

"Did you send him on to Schloss Herzensruh with them?"

"No; of course not. I'm going to take them with me in the morning."

"What an outer barbarian you are!" cried Cyril. "Do you expect Princess Otilie to put them on in public? She must have them in time to study the effect properly, and admire herself in them. Give them to me, and I'll take them to her at once."

"You don't mean to carry that case of jewels through the forest alone at night?"

"Who is to know that I am carrying it? It will go into my pocket. Besides, there are no robbers here; it's a regular Forest of Arden, a most suitable place for a betrothal. So trot out the case."

"A little later the forest will be dangerous on account of the wolves;

but they have not come down from the mountains yet, and Milord Cyril will be quite safe," said M. Drakovics, who found Cyril's restless movements very trying.

"That reminds me," said Caerleon, gloomily, as he unlocked one of the table-drawers and took out the jewel-case, "there came a message this morning from one of the mountain villages, saying that several people had been killed by a large solitary wolf, which can neither be trapped nor shot. They think it's a were-wolf, and they sent to beg me to come up and try to kill it. It seems that my Express rifle has made a name for itself. It's a horrid bother that I can't go. I suppose I shall have to let Prince Alexis know. One can't leave the people to be decimated on the chance of my having a day off some time next week. There you are, Cyril, if you are bent on going. Don't lose those rubies, or I'll tell them to send in the bill to you."

Cyril was already in the hall donning his fur-lined coat and cap; and putting the case in his pocket, he started on his lonely walk. Autumn was passing into winter, but there was no snow on the ground as yet, and the dry leaves crackled pleasantly under his feet as he took the moonlit path between the tall black tree-stems. For a short time he walked fast, in order to exorcise the feeling of unrest which possessed him; then he slackened his pace a little, and as the stillness of the forest made itself felt, began to whistle. He was tramping vigorously along in this way, with his hands thrust deep in his pockets, when it seemed to him that he saw the figure of a man on the path some distance in front of him. The shadows cast by the moonlight from the tree-trunks were so perplexing that he

could not be sure; but his blood leapt with a not unpleasant excitement as he assured himself that his revolver was in its usual pocket. If there was a man there, he had passed completely out of sight, and Cyril scanned narrowly the straight stems on either side of the path as he walked on, assuring himself that he was looking for some distorted tree which must have taken the shape of a human figure in the moonlight. No such tree appeared, however; but at the next turn of the path he found himself confronted by a man. His hand went to his revolver instantly; but he recognised the Prince of Dardania, and stepped back with a laugh.

"What! you here?" both exclaimed simultaneously. Cyril recovered himself first. "I didn't know you were accustomed to take midnight rambles in Thracian territory," he said. "Are you penning a woful sonnet?" He stopped hurriedly, remembering that the quotation was rather an unhappy one under the circumstances, and reflecting that no doubt Prince Alexis had been taking a last look at the abode of the lady of his love before she was lost to him for ever.

"Not exactly," returned the Prince, rather hesitatingly. "In fact, I was coming to ask you to do me a good turn. But perhaps your own business is urgent?"

"Oh, I am not love, only love's messenger," said Cyril, carelessly. "I am taking a little parcel to Schloss Herzensruh from my brother."

"Then, if you will, you can give me just the help I need," said the Prince, turning and walking by Cyril's side. "You see me, as you say in England, in a hole. The fact is, my dear Mortimer, I am in love."

Cyril's first remark was fortu-

nately only uttered mentally, for it was not of a complimentary character. "I don't quite see how I am to help you," he added aloud.

"No?" said the Prince; "but I do. Perhaps you may be surprised to hear that I love a lady of the Queen of Mœsia's household?"

"A lady of the household!" cried Cyril. "But I thought——"

"That I was in love with the Princess? But, my dear friend, a blind is sometimes necessary. At any rate, both the Queen and the Princess know the truth now."

"Then I suppose that's the secret of the snubbing you got the other night? It was tremendous. I was really sorry for you."

"Well," pursued the Prince, "the Queen has treated me better than I could have dared to hope. She is so good as to agree with my plan for a private marriage to-night."

"But why private?" asked Cyril.

"My friend, I have Ministers, who interest themselves in my affairs. I wish to present my marriage to them as an accomplished fact."

"I see; and no doubt the Queen thinks that a public wedding would be likely to encourage the rest of her ladies to go and do likewise, which would scarcely meet her views. Well, if the ruling power is so propitious, why don't you go in and win?"

"That is all my desire. I have at my summer-palace, five miles away, everything prepared, the chapel ready, witnesses, Greek and Lutheran clergy to perform the ceremony. But how can I reach my bride? King Johann has peopled the portion of the forest around the castle with gamekeepers and frontier-guards, and if I am seen, all is lost. Word would be taken to him immediately, and he bears such a grudge against me that

he would spare no pains to discover my object and to thwart it."

"But I don't see what you want me to do," said Cyril.

"Merely this, to fetch my bride from the castle, and escort her to me here. I have two good horses waiting, one with a lady's saddle, and you will not have far to go."

"But do you think I am going to compromise myself in this way without hope of reward?" said Cyril. "I insist on being asked to the wedding."

"Then I fear you will have to escort the bride all the way, while I start off on foot," said the Prince, "for I have not brought another horse."

"The honour is only too great," returned Cyril. "I am determined not to lose my share of the fun. Why, I daresay you have never even thought of securing any one to propose the health of the bridal pair, and I'm rather good at that sort of thing."

"No. I have not, indeed," said the Prince. "You are in earnest? Then I will give you your directions, and leave you here. When you have delivered your message, and left the castle, knock at the postern-door close to the angle of the wall on this side. If the mistress of the household opens it, say that you are come from me to fetch *Fräulein von Staubach*."

"What? the lectrice?" asked Cyril.

"Yes; *Fräulein von Staubach* is

the Queen's lectrice and secretary. You know her?" the Prince asked, rather anxiously.

"I have caught a glimpse of her once or twice—just enough to see that she was a fair-haired girl in spectacles. She doesn't show up as much as the other ladies."

"No; she is generally busy writing the Queen's letters. But you will know her when you see her? The Princess might play you a trick. She wears no gloves, and has a mole on the back of her left wrist."

"Oh, I shall know her all right. Then, when I have secured her, we have only to mount and ride away, I suppose?"

"Yes; the horses are here, you see, tied to this tree."

"But what am I to do if we meet any of the gamekeepers? They will think it rather queer to see me riding about late at night with one of the Queen's ladies."

"Unless you say that *Fräulein von Staubach* has been summoned away by a sudden message, and that you are escorting her to the station, I don't see what you can do; and that would leave a good deal unexplained," said the Prince, laughing. "They are not likely to stop you, and no blame can attach to you afterwards. You are merely doing a friend a good turn."

"All right, then," said Cyril. "We shall meet again," and he waved his hand as Prince Alexis started on his lengthy walk, while he went on to the castle.

CHAPTER XIV.—OVER THE BORDER AND AWAY.

Cyril's appearance at such an hour caused some surprise at *Schloss Herzensrub*, but he did not linger over the performance of his errand. After receiving a promise from the high functionary to whom he de-

livered the jewels that they should be placed in the Princess's hands immediately, and declining alike the King's invitation to come in and rest and his offer of an escort home, he found himself speedily

outside the grounds once more. When out of sight of any one who might be looking after him from the porter's lodge, he turned aside from the path, and made his way to the little door in the wall. It opened immediately at his knock, and he saw two ladies standing in the shadow within, the taller of whom he recognised at once as the Queen.

"I was not expecting you, Lord Cyril," she said, calmly.

"The Prince of Dardania has intrusted me with the honour of escorting Fräulein von Staubach into his territory, your Majesty," said Cyril, while the other lady giggled hysterically.

"My child, control yourself," said the Queen, with an authoritative touch on her shoulder. "You have met Lord Cyril Mortimer before, I think? I will not detain you here, in case my absence should be remarked. Lord Cyril, I can trust you?"

"I will do my best to deserve your Majesty's confidence," said Cyril. "And now, if you will pardon my hurrying you, I think that Fräulein von Staubach and I ought to start. We have a fairly long ride before us."

"Farewell, my child!" said the Queen, pressing what seemed to Cyril a very affectionate kiss on the girl's forehead. "I shall expect to hear from you to-morrow."

Fräulein von Staubach's reply was inaudible; but she threw her arms round the Queen's neck and kissed her vehemently, then took Cyril's offered arm and walked quickly away with him, the Queen locking the door after them. As they picked their way among the tree-trunks—for Cyril thought it advisable not to walk in the open—he stole a look now and then at his companion when they came to a patch of moonlight. She was about

middle height, and apparently rather stout, though this might be the fault of her wraps, and her fair hair was elaborately frizzed in front, and gathered into the fashionable lump behind. Her eyes were concealed by her spectacles; but Cyril could just distinguish that her eyebrows were so fair as to be almost colourless under the long gauze veil which covered her face, and was tied in a bow under her chin. So far as he could tell, she was wearing an evening dress, with the train carefully looped up, and a heavy fur cloak over it. A less suitable costume for a midnight ride in winter could scarcely have been devised, and he remarked that it might have been wise to come in a riding-habit.

"Oh, but I could not have been married in a habit. What a hideous idea!" she exclaimed, in a high-pitched voice, with a marked Low German accent, such as after that night Cyril could never hear without a shudder.

"I am afraid you will find it difficult to ride in that dress," he said.

"It will be difficult to me to ride at all," she said, with a giggle; and Cyril restrained with difficulty an exclamation of disgust. It began to be clear to him now why the Prince had so readily resigned to him the honour of escorting his betrothed. They had reached the horses by this time, and Cyril prepared to assist her to mount.

"Put your left hand on my shoulder, and hold the pommel with your right," he said; "and give me your left foot. Now, spring!"

He gave a mighty heave, and the lady sprang; but with such ill success that she came down again in the same place. A second and a third attempt failed likewise, and Cyril lost patience.

"If I can't mount you this time, Fräulein, I must take you back to the castle. It won't do for me to be keeping you poised in mid-air all night."

This time, with a frantic effort on the part of Fräulein von Staubach, they were successful, and Cyril mounted his own horse (the animals were fortunately quiet ones) and guided both into the path.

"Try to sit a little straighter in your saddle," he said to his companion. "If the beast begins to trot, you will go off."

"Oh no!" she giggled shrilly. "I shall hold round his neck."

Cyril was silent in deep disgust, and resolved not to speak to her again; but when a disposition to trot on the part of the horses had been checked several times by little screams from her, he remarked drily—

"We shall never reach the palace to-night at this rate."

"Never mind me, then, *Mein Herr*, I will hold," she responded valiantly, and Cyril set his teeth, and urged the horses on. Somehow or other his companion managed to keep her seat, and, with the help of a few directions from him, did better than he had expected, although he still muttered wrathfully to himself that he was thankful there was no one about to see him giving riding-lessons to a *sack*! Slowly the long miles were covered, and it was after midnight when the riders entered the courtyard of the Prince of Dardania's palace, which Cyril had before visited with Caerleon. Here all was bustle, servants bearing torches were ranged on either side of the steps, and Prince Alexis himself hastened to receive his bride, who slipped from her horse into his arms with a hysterical laugh.

"It has been almost too much!" Cyril heard her say, as the Prince

led her up the steps, and it seemed to him that she had visibly increased in height since he first saw her in the castle garden.

"I've heard of people's getting two inches taller with the consciousness of success, but I never saw it happen before," he said to himself, as he gave the horses into the charge of a servant, and allowed himself to be conducted up the steps by a bowing official. The door opened into a great hall, in a room leading out of which Cyril could see a number of Dardanian ladies, evidently of high rank, gathered about their future Princess; but his guide led him on through a long passage into a chapel, where everything was prepared for the celebration of the Greek marriage-rite. The space on one side of the aisle was filled with Dardanian chiefs and nobles, splendid-looking men in gorgeous national costumes; and as Cyril was ushered to his place among them, he wondered how long it would be before a like throng was gathered together for Caerleon's wedding, and how many different religious ceremonies it would take to marry him. He had some time to wait, for the Lutheran rite seemed to be proceeding in another room; but after a while the vacant space on the other side of the chapel was filled by the ladies of whom he had caught a glimpse, and the bride and bridegroom entered, and advanced up the aisle. The lady's face was hidden by an elaborate lace veil, and Cyril wondered how in the world she had managed to bring it with her; but his attention was quickly distracted to more important details. The half-married bride was certainly taller than she had appeared in the garden, and carried herself regally; and as Cyril gazed at her by the flickering light of the lamps and candles

burning before the sacred pictures and on the dais, it struck him that she was otherwise changed. Fräulein von Staubach was fair, but he was almost certain that this girl's knot of hair was dark; and when she turned her head for a moment it seemed to him that her eyebrows also were dark and strongly marked.

What had happened? What was the meaning of this mystery? Had he been fooled? He listened eagerly to the words of the priest, trying to discover some clue; but he was unacquainted with the service and with the language, and had no prayer-book. He gathered that some question was being asked of the bridegroom; but strain his ears as he would, he could not catch in it the name of Sophie von Staubach, while for one awful moment he was haunted by the dread that he had heard the words Otilie Ivanovna. A moment or two more, and his fear was confirmed, for the question addressed to the bride was answered, not in the shrill Low German accents of Fräulein von Staubach, but in the clear polished tones of Princess Otilie. Cyril was standing quietly by, while his brother's bride was married to another man before his eyes! He sprang forward, but a hand laid upon his shoulder on either side pulled him back. He was gripped by the two stalwart Dardanians between whom he was standing.

"Monsieur must not disturb the ceremony," said one of them in bad French; and Cyril resisted the temptation to disturb it to some purpose by a shout proclaiming the falseness of the bride, and remained mute and motionless throughout the protracted rite, with its prayers and incense, its presentation of the Common Cup, and its crowning and marching round the dais, while all the time the thought was forcing

itself into his mind that Caerleon must have known of this. This explained his willingness to enter into the engagement at all, and his anxiety and misery throughout the past week, also his callousness with regard to his *fiancée*. And Princess Otilie! Cyril ground his teeth as he remembered how she had confided her fears to him, and he had comforted her, while all the time she had been carrying on a complicated train of deception. But, after all, her moral turpitude was nothing to Caerleon's. Cyril, the shrewd, the far-sighted, the diplomatist, had been duped, and by the brother whom he had always regarded as an honest simpleton, whose every thought he believed he knew. It may seem strange to say that when Cyril's first rage had cooled, the effect of his discovery was to heighten very considerably his respect for Caerleon, but so it was. A man who had been able to deceive *him* in this way must have something in him.

Cyril had arrived at this point when the ceremony concluded, and the bridal company left the chapel to sign the register. He was among the foremost who followed them into the room in which the book was placed in readiness, and when she had written her name, Princess Otilie offered the pen to him with her most charming smile—

"Come, Lord Cyril; you will add your name as a witness?"

"I am much obliged; but your Highness will not catch me twice," he replied; and she turned away with a laugh. He felt tempted to make his escape at once; but pride forbade him to slink away and show himself defeated, and he determined to face her again, and tell her a home-truth or two. His opportunity came when the bridal pair had proceeded to the throne-room to receive the congratulations of

those present, and his name was duly announced by the grand chamberlain.

"Now, Lord Cyril," said the Princess, "confess that you were completely deceived. I wanted to wear a riding-habit; but I knew that the real Sophie von Staubach would never consent to be married in one, and I felt that I must dress the character consistently."

"The illusion was perfect," returned Cyril. "I can only congratulate your Royal Highness on the skill with which you have rendered the first act of your—tragedy."

"Tragedy?" asked Prince Alexis, sharply. "Why tragedy?"

"If I wished to be unpleasant," said Cyril, "I might quote Shakespeare, and say, 'She has deceived her father, and may thee.' But that would be unkind, and besides, the tragedy to which I refer is not a domestic but a public one. It doesn't require much foresight to prophesy that the results of this night's work will be

'Sword and fire,
Red ruin, and the breaking up of laws,
The craft of kindred and the ruthless
 hosts
Of Scythia swarming o'er the Euxine
 sea.'

But you really must excuse me," he broke off, apologetically; "I seem to be dealing in English literature specimens, adapted to present circumstances, to-night. The fact is, that my mind is still so completely under the spell of the superb acting of her Royal Highness, that poetry comes to my tongue more readily than prose."

The Prince frowned. "I fail to see why a European war should be the consequence of our marriage, as you seem to imply."

"Simply because Thracia has parted with territory under a misapprehension."

"Ah, my price!" cried Princess Ottilie. "You see I know your little plans, Lord Cyril, and I have out-plotted you. You are angry to-night, but to-morrow you will see that you have deserved it. You have done all you could to make me believe that your brother was deeply in love with me, when all the time I knew from his own lips that it was all he could do to endure the sight of me. It was I who arranged with the Prince that you were to be brought here to-night. I was determined to have my revenge on you, to show you that there were others who could pretend as well as yourself. Don't talk of misapprehensions. Your brother the King will be the first to tell you that he has aided me throughout in this plot of mine until to-day."

"That my brother was foolish enough to allow himself to be persuaded into joining you in playing a practical joke, in very doubtful taste, on your father, will not satisfy the Thracians," retorted Cyril. "They will demand back the territory out of which they were cozened, and the great Powers will be drawn into the war."

"I hope the consequences will not be so serious as you seem to think," said Prince Alexis, breaking into the war of words. "I have some little influence at the Scythian Court, and I can promise you that it shall be exerted on behalf of the independence of Thracia, and in favour of your brother, to whom I shall always be grateful for the part he has played during the last few days. And now, Lord Cyril, we must not detain you longer, or King Carlino will be anxious about you. Stefan here will take you to a room where there is refreshment prepared, and after that you will find a fresh horse and an escort of six of my guard to take

you back to Thracia. I owe you many thanks for the assistance you have given me to-night."

"And remember," added Princess Otilie, as Cyril bowed, "that though I can't quite forgive King Carlino for the way he has treated me, I am sorry I teased him so much. But I am not sorry that I hoaxed you to-night."

Thus dismissed, Cyril had no option but to bid farewell to the royal couple, and commit himself to the charge of Stefan, who brought him to a buffet, where he made a hasty meal. He was conscious that it would have been more in keeping with his tragic utterances to depart from the palace at once, refusing either to eat or drink, and denouncing vengeance against its perjured mistress; but the night was very cold, he was tired, and there was a long ride before him. And after all, it could not be denied that the Princess had played her part wonderfully well; there was no disgrace in having been deceived by her. But it was inexcusable to have been taken in by Caerleon, clumsy and unwilling actor that he was; and Cyril could only allege in his own favour that he might be pardoned for not suspecting such an unprecedented event as his brother's lending himself to support a course of deception. The thought comforted him a little, however, and as he mounted the horse prepared for him he felt more at peace with himself. The ride home occupied a much shorter space of time than the former one, and Cyril laughed angrily to himself as he remembered the amount of trouble he had wasted in giving a riding-lesson to the best rider in Mœsia. The thought recalled to him his grudge against Caerleon, and when he had dismissed his Dardanian escort a little way from the hunting-lodge, he resolved to

punish his brother by giving him one more night's suspense. He was bound to hear in the morning of what had happened; but it would only serve him right not to be relieved from his anxiety sooner. Accordingly, Cyril went straight to bed as soon as he got in, although he heard the voices of Caerleon and M. Drakovics still engaged in earnest discourse in the dining-room.

A little later, footsteps paused outside his door, and Caerleon's voice said, "Asleep, old man?" to which he only replied by a sleepy grunt.

"I'm glad I didn't let the fellow come in and bemoan himself to me," he reflected, as the footsteps passed on. "I should have had to tell him in self-defence."

Cyril slept late the next morning, and when he awoke he heard Caerleon tramping moodily up and down outside the window, speaking a cheerless word now and then to the dogs. He rose and dressed slowly, turning over in his mind the various methods which occurred to him of utilising this defeat of his as a stepping-stone to further victory. Presently the sound of another voice in the garden arrested his attention, and looking out, he saw one of the King of Mœsia's gorgeously attired jägers giving Caerleon a parcel, which he said he had been commanded by the Queen to place in his own hands. As soon as the man was gone, Caerleon opened the packet with some surprise, and Cyril saw that it contained the case of rubies which he himself had carried to Schloss Herzensruh the night before. Lying above the jewels was a paper, which Caerleon unfolded and read.

"Oh, joy! she's off!" he cried, infinite relief in his tones. "I'm rid of her at last."

"Hand it in," said Cyril, and his brother gave it to him, turning to rearrange the glowing gems on their velvet bed, with fingers that were not quite steady. The paper was in the Princess's writing:—

"At last I am able to release your Majesty from a position which I grieve to see you have found intolerably irksome. They say that we women are willing to sell our very souls for jewels; but you will believe me when I tell you that I had far rather see your rubies in the hands of the person to whom they rightly belong, and to whom you would prefer to give them. When this time of storm and stress is over, and you meet Mdle. Nadia again, present them to her with my love. Tell her this also from me, that if she desires a testimony to your character, she need only refer to me. You were right in saying, when you scolded me so rudely two days ago, that I should never have dared to go so far with any one else; but I knew that I could trust you, and my trust was justified. At any rate, I will bear witness that you were softened by none of my overtures, that you kept me at a distance—not gently, no, I cannot say gently—but firmly, certainly, always firmly. Forgive me; this is the last time I shall tease you. My husband and I pray for your happiness and that of your bride.—From your friend,

OTTILIE, Princess of Dardania.

"I entreat you to give my remembrances to your brother, who will tell you any particulars about my wedding that you may care to hear."

"Then you are glad to be out of it?" said Cyril.

"Glad? Rather! If I wasn't a middle-aged monarch, I should

throw up my cap and jump for joy. Give me the letter and I'll tear it up. I shouldn't like Nadia ever to come upon the detestable thing. Fancy a woman's writing like that!"

"Then you intend to try your luck again with Miss O'Malachy!"

"How can I, so long as I am king? But to have got rid of this wretched engagement seems to bring me nearer to her at once."

"What a selfish beast you are!" was Cyril's remark. "Thinking only of yourself, and nothing about Thracia, and what the breaking off of this affair will involve."

"I'm very sorry if it leads to trouble," said Caerleon, "and I'll do all I can to set it right, short of running into another engagement; but you can't expect me to be sorry that this is over."

"It will lead to war, undoubtedly."

"Why should it? If I don't feel myself insulted by the Princess's way of going on, I don't see why any one else should."

"Thracia won't see things in the same light, though. The whole nation has been insulted in your person, and, furthermore, cheated into giving up territory for nothing. Nothing but blood will wash out the remembrance."

"But I will explain the whole thing."

"Do. Who do you think will believe you? No one will imagine that a sane man could make such an utter and irretrievable idiot of himself. It will simply be thought that you are trying to shield the girl. No; all you can do is to keep your mouth shut. Look here," Cyril was struck by a sudden idea. "Will you leave Drakovics and me to put things straight?"

"If you think you can do better without me," replied Caerleon, pacifically, overlooking his brother's uncomplimentary language in con-

sideration of the provocation he had received. "But mind, on your honour, there must be no more meddling with marriages and engagements. If I hear so much as a whisper of such a thing, I will repudiate all your negotiations, and take the management into my own hands."

"No fear. After this thing has turned out so badly, I shall not take up the matrimonial agency business again in a hurry. I only want to have you out of the way, because I am afraid of King Johann's getting round you. Go and kill your were-wolf, can't you? and be a benefit to society."

"I'd go like a shot, all the more that I shan't have to bring *her* the skin; but don't you think it would look rather bad—rather unfeeling, you know?"

"I think you are the most exasperating idiot I ever had to do with," returned Cyril, hopelessly. "Don't you see that it will look worse for you to be hanging about here with that face on? Go and be alone with nature and your grief—or, in plain English, go and grin where no one can see you."

"All right," said Caerleon, with a laugh. "May I have breakfast first?"

"Yes, so long as you are well out of the way before they can send here from the castle. Give your orders now, so that you can start soon."

"By the bye," said Caerleon, "what did the Princess mean by saying that you could give me particulars of the wedding?"

"Well, if you particularly want to know, I was present at the ceremony—not intentionally, as you can guess."

"Last night? Queer, that you should just have happened to drop in upon them."

This was all that passed between

them on the subject, for Cyril was resolved never to reveal the crowning deception of which he had been the victim. He could only hope that Princess Ottilie would be equally reticent.

The brothers breakfasted alone; and after the meal Cyril hurried Caerleon off, in dire fear lest an emissary from Schloss Herzensruh should appear before he had arranged his plan of action with M. Drakovics. As soon as his brother was out of sight, he obtained admission to the Premier's room, where M. Drakovics was devouring a blue-book full of statistics simultaneously with his breakfast. He looked up in some surprise as Cyril entered.

"You are early, milord."

"Are you prepared to meet a great emergency, monsieur?"

M. Drakovics collected his thoughts, and was prepared immediately.

"You need not tell me what it is, milord. The King refuses to fulfil his engagement."

"Not at all. The Princess has bolted."

"Bolted?" inquired M. Drakovics, mildly.

"Yes, bolted—cut and run, eloped, with the Prince of Dardania."

"But is it too late to stop them?"

"Quite. They were married last night."

"But this is appalling, milord!"

"It is bad enough; but there is worse behind. My brother was in the plot."

"Impossible, milord! You cannot tell me that his Majesty would enter into an arrangement to make himself the laughing-stock of the world?"

"It is unfortunately true that my brother only engaged himself to the Princess that he might help

her in carrying out this design of hers. Of course the Queen was in it as well. Between them they have made a pretty good use of him. I am as much astonished as you can possibly be at his having listened to them for an instant."

"Ah! the admission scarcely agrees with the claim to a complete knowledge of his Majesty's character which you advanced some time ago," said M. Drakovics, looking up with a smile which was more like a snarl.

"You have a right to make any remarks you please on the subject," said Cyril, quietly. "They cannot be more bitter than those I have made to myself. In fact, I have no doubt that we could pass an hour or two very pleasantly in conducting a series of mutual recriminations. But if you are the man I think you, you will not waste time on trifles, but will join with me in using the few minutes on which we can count in taking measures which may yet turn this crushing defeat into a triumph."

"Milord, you are superb," said M. Drakovics, looking at him with heartfelt if somewhat reluctant admiration. "You have the true diplomatic spirit. I accept your rebuke willingly, and rejoice that I have such a colleague at my side in this crisis. What are the measures you would propose?"

"There is one fatal flaw in our case," said Cyril,—"Caerleon's connivance in the Princess's plot. If that once comes out, nothing can save us. But the happy couple are both animated by sentiments of such deep gratitude towards him, that I don't think they are likely to split. If the Queen had been on the opposite side, she would have been dangerous; but King Johann is not likely to ask her advice, and she will not feel in-

clined to interfere unasked. Therefore I think we may count upon the facts not coming out, unless Caerleon publishes it in one of these unaccountable chivalrous fits of his. He is out of the way for to-day, and we ought to be able to get things settled in such a way that it will not dawn upon him how we managed it, by the time he comes back. Bounce is our only chance. Our business just now is to keep Caerleon on the throne, not to give Europe lessons in morality gratis at his expense. How soon can the First Army Corps be ready to mobilise?"

"In twenty-four hours. We tried the experiment only a fortnight ago."

"Good. Then telegraph to Sertchaieff to mass it on the Moesian frontier as soon as it can be got there. You see our game?"

"I do, milord. It is bold, but not impossible. But why not occupy the ceded territory at once?"

"Because we don't wish to start the war if we can help it. We must carry this business through without giving the Powers cause to interfere, if we can. Pannonia will do our work if we use the Schwarzwald-Molzau family influence properly; but for us to cross the Moesian frontier would be defying her to do her worst. Still, you might also telegraph to the commandant at Feodoratz, ordering him to be ready to move out with his troops at a moment's notice. They are only ten miles from the disputed strip, and could take possession and hold it easily until they were relieved the day after to-morrow by the First Army Corps. There is a horn! You had better be in the drawing-room with me."

"One moment, milord. Where is the King?"

"I have sent him out shooting.

He is better out of the way this morning."

"But if the King of Moesia were to send after him and capture him, we should be lost."

"King Johann Casimir will not hear where he is, if I can help it," said Cyril, "and the idea would not occur to his mind, in any case. If he were on good terms with the Queen, it is the kind of bold measure that would suggest itself to her; but he isn't, and therefore she won't advise him to do it."

They went into the drawing-room, the only room in the little house which boasted of foreign furniture and decorations, and presently a very high official of the Moesian Court was ushered in. M. Drakovics and Cyril received him with grave faces and in dead silence.

"My orders are to open my business to no one but the King himself," said the messenger.

"His Majesty cannot receive any one this morning," returned Cyril, coldly. "About an hour ago her Royal Highness sent him a letter, the perusal of which has deeply affected him. I will take charge of any message of which you may be the bearer."

But this was not in the scope of the messenger's instructions, and after a little more parleying, he departed, and M. Drakovics utilised the opportunity to send off his telegrams. It was some time before another horn was heard; but now it was King Johann Casimir himself who rode up to the shooting-box, and asked to see King Carlino, only to receive the same answer as his deputy.

"It is absolutely impossible for me even to inform my brother of your Majesty's arrival," said Cyril; "but if you can suggest any means by which the gravity of the present crisis may be lessened, M. Drako-

vics and I are empowered to consider it, and to take any preliminary measures that may be necessary."

The King sat down, and Cyril saw that the battle was half won, although his first words were full of dignity.

"I do not understand you, Lord Cyril. This is a most unfortunate and unpleasant affair; but it does not seem to me to bring about a crisis."

"No?" said Cyril. "Will your Majesty consider for a moment how the facts will strike the ears of Europe? A trustful young King, whose advisers are above all things anxious to live in peace with their nearest neighbours, is inveigled (I beg your Majesty's pardon, but that is the word that will be used) into ceding a portion of territory in return for the promise of the hand of a certain lady. Nothing is told him of the fact that the lady is desirous of marrying another person, although he himself insists, so delicate is his sense of honour, on acquainting her with the facts of a past and gone love-affair of his own before he will ask her to marry him. Then, when the territory has been ceded, she suddenly elopes with the other man, and he is left in the lurch. I ask you whether the position is likely to be accepted meekly either by a man of my brother's character or by a high-spirited nation like Thracia?"

"But you cannot imagine that I had anything to do with my daughter's marriage?" cried the King.

"I bring no accusations, your Majesty. I have merely stated the case as it will appear to Thracia and to Europe. Thracia gave up a portion of territory in order to gain a certain alliance, which is now refused her. It is impossible that you were ignorant of the mutual

affection that existed between her Royal Highness and the Prince of Dardania; but you gave no hint of it either to my brother or to me, and all this serves to complicate the situation. M. Drakovics will tell your Majesty the steps we have felt it necessary to take in order to vindicate the dignity of the country."

King Johann Casimir turned helplessly to the Premier.

"I fear that when the news is once known in Thracia, the popular indignation will be overwhelming," said the latter, "and I have therefore been the more anxious to conduct everything in the most regular way. Unless your Majesty can suggest any means of relieving the tension of the situation, I may remark that we shall be forced to declare war this evening, and to proceed to occupy the disputed territory immediately."

"But there will be a revolution in Moesia if that strip of land is lost through any action of a member of my family," cried the King.

A look of satisfaction flashed from M. Drakovics to Cyril. "Such a possibility can hardly influence the action of Thracia, although it is doubtless fraught with much interest to your Majesty's advisers," said the Premier.

"Nothing could be further from our thoughts than to regard such a disastrous event with indifference," said Cyril, warmly. "My brother would be horrified by the very idea. Is there nothing your Majesty can suggest to avert such a calamity, while at the same time salving the wounded honour of Thracia?"

"We have no power of raising an indemnity," said the King.

"The very suggestion is an insult, your Majesty!" cried M. Drakovics. "We Thracians are striving for our national life, not for money. What we desire is a place among the

nations. Any assistance towards the attainment of our ideal——" he broke off, watching the King narrowly.

"In what direction?"

"Our chief reason for congratulating ourselves on the alliance proposed between King Carlino and your Majesty's family was the conviction that Thracia would thereby range herself on the side of Pannonia and European peace. That hope is now lost, for what claim have we on Pannonia? But if there were any means by which she might be induced still to support us in obtaining our recognition from the Grand Signior of Roum——"

"I see. You desire our understanding to remain in force, with the one unfortunate exception!" said the King, obviously much relieved.

"Exactly. We desire that our alliance with your Majesty's kingdom may continue," said M. Drakovics. "This object may appear a small return for which to waive our claim to the ceded territory; but it is so important to us that if it is assured, I can answer for the tranquillity of Thracia."

"My brother is also extremely anxious not to press hardly upon your Majesty," said Cyril. "It would not be like him not to feel keenly such a slight as he has received; but for your sake, and for the advantage of his kingdom, he will lay aside his own feeling in the matter. Your Majesty will wish, no doubt, to consult your Ministers—who were to arrive at the castle, I remember, in order to be present at the ceremony so unhappily interrupted—before signifying your adherence to the plan we suggest; and you will probably also consider it necessary to communicate with the Emperor of Pannonia. M. Drakovics will undertake

that no active steps shall be taken until this evening in the question of the frontier; and I do not doubt that your Majesty will think, on considering the circumstances, that to give us the assurance we ask is merely a piece of international courtesy."

"It's done!" said Cyril, meeting Caerleon that night on his return in triumph with the were-wolf's skin, "though I thought my hair would have turned grey with anxiety while we waited. The treaty with Mœsia is to stand, and Pannonia will continue to support us at Czarigrad. These seem only little things; but they mean a great deal to us, and they stave off the Great War for a little while longer. Everything is quiet now."

"Wait a minute," said Caerleon. "There's something I want to say. It seems to me that neither of you,"

glancing from Cyril to M. Drakovics, "has quite understood hitherto my intentions about marrying. That there may be no doubt about them in the future, I intend to declare you, Cyril, my heir when we return to Bellaviste, and this must be confirmed by the Legislative Assembly if I am to stay in Thracia. Miss O'Malachy won't marry me, and I won't marry any one else; but this will secure the succession to the throne."

"I don't quite appreciate being set up with you for Scythia to plot against," said Cyril; "but never mind, I daresay I shall get used to it in time."

"And I cannot doubt that your Majesty's choice will be most popular in Thracia," said M. Drakovics.

"Ah, very good,—and when I have time, Cyril, I will set about looking for a wife for you," said Caerleon, lazily.

PERSONAL REMINISCENCES TOUCHING OPTUM-SMOKING.

ALMOST the first Chinaman I set my eyes upon when I landed in China proper in the year 1869 was one Wong Ko-ung, the *comptadore* or petty accountant in the British Consulate at Shanghai: he had been in that position long before 1869, and even at that date he had acquired a well-established reputation as an opium-smoker. This man continued to serve the Consulate faithfully and well in the same capacity until about four years ago, smoking opium steadily all the time, and never, so far as I am aware, permitting this habit to interfere in any way with his official or social duties. Like most well-to-do Chinese, he always had around him a number of hangers-on in the shape of clerks, wives, concubines, and poor relatives, all more or less dependent on him; but his household, though in the consular enclosure or grounds, was invariably treated as private, and sacred to himself. No one asked any questions or interfered in any way with what went on inside: he ruled his people as a petty despot, and apparently to every one's satisfaction. Most of the British consuls at the minor outposts intrusted him with money and accounts: he never disappointed his friends, always acted punctually and shrewdly, was generally respected, and at last died at an average age, leaving the business to a son-in-law. He always, it is true, had a yellow, cadaverous, opium-smoking appearance, but the state of his general health rarely if ever kept him from his counting-house: he could well afford his indulgence, and it certainly never prejudiced his mental power. And here I may repeat an observation which a private

servant of mine—a sort of Chinese Sam Weller—once made to me: "Stupid men like myself don't smoke opium: it is always the men with brains who smoke; they concoct profound schemes whilst they are smoking." I have certainly found that opium-smokers are usually men of higher mental power than non-smokers. It is generally believed by the Chinese that long-continued opium-smoking checks or stays altogether the power to beget children. If so, then this seems to be the only penalty that Wong Ko-ung ever paid. I believe I am right in saying he died childless, in spite of his extensive family connections.

After this first experience I spent two years and a half in Peking and Tientsin, scouring the surrounding country in all directions, visiting many large towns and villages, and travelling between 2000 and 3000 miles on horseback upon the Mongolian steppes beyond the Great Wall. Both in Peking and Tientsin it struck me that the effects of opium were rather bad. I often used to drop in at the opium-dens to watch the smokers. There was never noise or disorder. Nor, on the other hand, did I ever perceive any skeletons in rags, or any signs of shameless debauch and abject misery, directly traceable to opium. Debt and impecuniosity are chronic conditions all over China. In the northern parts dirt and vermin are also well-nigh universal with the common people, in each case quite independently of opium. In the winter it is so bitterly cold, and in the summer so scorchingly hot, that the opium-houses, with their pale light and roomy couches, are delightful resting-places, certainly

not so brutalising in aspect as the noisy gin-palaces of English towns. In the hotels I noticed that merchants and hawkers usually took a few pipes morning and evening. As the whole hotel population, of all ranks, ages, and sexes, often made up their beds upon the same *k'ang*,—a sort of raised brick platform, covering half the room, and heated with straw, argols, or brushwood,—I had abundant opportunities of both smelling and tasting opium. I found the smell rather sickening or cloying, but not otherwise disagreeable. I never had the courage to gulp down the smoke; but, taken into the mouth only, it seemed to me rather nice. I noticed that women very often smoked, much oftener than (I subsequently found) in the south. A good many women of but moderate reputation are wont to haunt the average Chinese inn: besides, there are cooks, scavengers, the landlord's family, a few female travellers, and so on. Also in the shops and eating-houses women managers are a good deal in evidence in the north. Perhaps we Europeans saw more of them than an ordinary native traveller would have done, because their curiosity often prompted them to come and peep at us. I observed that the Manchu women often smoked opium too: they stand about the streets and doors much more freely than the Chinese women, and nearly always smoke tobacco. All opium-smokers seemed to me to be rather ashamed of the habit. I never heard any one of either sex go so far as to praise it or recommend it. The chief impression left upon me was that it caused a waste of money and time, and I believe these considerations usually operate after a season of indulgence to disgust the smoker, and cause in him or her a desire to discontinue it.

Certainly the feeling of shame, weak and unsteady though it may be, is much greater in the moderate opium-smoker than in the English excessive drinker. I was over and over again asked if I could cure the craving. Often a smoker would rate me gently for belonging to a nation which supplied the noxious drug; but as a rule he did not seem very serious about it, and there was always a sort of lurking consciousness in his manner that the charge was mere claptrap. The fact that Europeans themselves would not smoke (except out of curiosity), and despised Chinese smokers, seemed to leave a great impression upon the average victim. I often heard tales of excessive smoking,—how such a man smoked all night and slept all day, and so on; but I never once heard of a man absolutely ruining himself or his family by indulging, still less did I ever come across a case myself. Peking is at best a vicious place. Here we have an idle Manchu population, supported by the Government, and to a great extent debarred by custom from competing in industry with the pure Chinese, even if willing and able. Besides this, Peking is the coveted haven of all officials who have saved money, and wish to keep in touch with the Court. Money is plentiful, and luxury is great: to a large extent the same may be said of Tientsin. Though in the north spirituous liquor is freely drunk, drunkenness is very rare, and for this reason causes no feeling of shame when it does occur; in fact, it is rather a graceful and complimentary act to get tipsy, or feign tipsiness, at a feast: there is absolutely no sense of degradation in it, such as is inseparable from opium-smoking. My first servant at the Legation was an opium-smoker; so was my first teacher:

and both of these were provided for me officially. I think most of the other teachers and servants were non-smokers. Those who did not smoke, invariably made fun at the expense of those who did. The above are the not very profound impressions which daily contact with opium-smokers left upon me after over two years' residence in the north. To sum up, all who smoked were rather ashamed of it: none ever boasted of it: most admitted that it was a "fast" and debauched form of pleasure. It undoubtedly, as I could see, caused a waste of time and money, and this extravagance of course to a certain extent impoverished the family concerned; but I never noticed any dreadful inroads upon the constitution, nor did I often hear of such; and when I did, the victims described were rich, and could afford it.

After this, again, I spent two years and a half at Hankow and Kewkiang on the Great River, travelling overland between the two places, and, when travelling, of course living in native inns. My residence at both these ports was upon the European "settlement," and therefore the facilities I had for mixing with the villagers and shop-people were not so extensive as in the north, where we travelled more, and seldom spoke anything but Chinese; still, I used to walk out every day. The official writers at both consulates were opium-smokers, but at the same time fat prosperous-looking men, of great intelligence. My private teacher was also a smoker. He was about forty years of age, had just bought a concubine, and she soon presented him with a baby. As at Tientsin, so at Hankow and Kewkiang, the more intelligent of the official servants in the consulate were opium-smokers; in fact, a leading Chinese servant,

like the characteristic French valet of the plays, must be a bit of a rogue, if he is to keep an effective eye on the others. My own body-servant, who remained with me from this time onwards for twenty-five years, was not only a strict non-smoker but a rigid non-drinker: he would not even use tobacco. He belonged to the sect, wrongly described as "Vegetarians," which recently distinguished itself by massacring a number of helpless missionaries near Foochow. He despised and was a deadly enemy of all opium-smokers. He often used to beguile the time whilst he was assisting my toilet, or waiting upon me at table, by recounting the villainies of the other servants. Yet I never heard him say that any family had been ruined by opium-smoking. He knew to a nicety how many pipes or hours a day the viceroy, the governor, or the general smoked; how much the prefect paid for his concubines; who gave and who took bribes, and how much; and all like matters which form the subject of ordinary Chinese conversation: but he never told me any harrowing opium stories of dying by inches, starving wives, early deaths, and wasted opportunities. Rather the reverse. It was, "Such a one, in the depths of the night, over his opium pipe, concocted such and such a successful scheme for filling his pockets." During these years on the Great River I casually noticed a considerable waste of money and time in connection with opium-smoking: nothing more. It was also evident that, as with our dissolute "corner-men" in England, so with the Chinese opium-smoker, the evil habit often lost a man a job, kept him in shabby clothes, and gave him a sullen, self-indulgent, and hand-dog appearance,—I was going to say, made his house less comfortable; but nearly all Chinese

interiors, with the exception of those of the small rich minority, are grimy, comfortless, and unfurnished to the last degree; so that in this respect there is little difference to chronicle in favour of the non-smokers.

On two different occasions I resided in the celebrated and busy city of Canton, spending a year and a half on the "settlement," and a year and a half in a Chinese *yamun*, or "official residence." During the whole three years I used to parade the native streets for at least two hours a-day, prying into every nook and cranny, acquainting myself with officials and people of every rank and class from the highest to the lowest, studying the local dialects, and getting as nearly as I could to the bottom of everything connected with social life. My personal teacher, a man of extremely lofty character, and subsequently employed for many years by the Hong-Kong Government, was an opium-smoker, as I learnt through my loquacious servant, and subsequently again from the teacher's own official employers. He was so ashamed of it that he seems to have begun to check the habit as soon as he came to reside with me; but as he was old, miserly, and feeble, he was compelled to surreptitiously swallow opium pills in order to "support the walls of his stomach." The most tried if not the ablest of the official servants were opium-smokers. Of the two writers the smarter one was a smoker. Opium-dens were common everywhere; but corruption was universal: opium, gaming, and every other popular vice, went on quite merrily at Canton. I had a second private teacher of the Hakka race, who was either so heavy an opium-smoker, or so delicate a man to sustain whatever amount he really did smoke, that

he possessed scarcely the power to articulate; but he was gentle and mild-mannered, a very dutiful son, and a kind husband. The viceroy—who is still, at the age of seventy-two, doing excellent service as a viceroy in the north—was not only a heavy opium-smoker, but told me so himself. His chief sorrow was that, despite numerous concubines, he had no child of his own. He told me that it was during his campaign against the Taiping rebels that he first acquired the evil habit, on account of toothache. Two or three years later he was accused by a censor of being an opium-smoker, and was removed from office; but he is so honest and straightforward a man that the Emperor has been obliged to employ him once more. The Tartar-General was also generally understood to smoke opium. The next highest official, the Literary Chancellor, was not only a heavy smoker, but he was officially accused of it by a censor. The viceroy was ordered to report, which he did as follows, evidently with his tongue in his cheek: "What goes on in the depths of the Literary Chancellor's private residence, your servant, not having the *entrée*, is naturally unable to say; but your servant observes that the Literary Chancellor's cheeks are big and fat, and certainly not like the cadaverous cheeks of those who smoke opium heavily: he does not therefore commit himself to an opinion." In all the passenger steamers, both between Canton and Hong-Kong and on the Great River, there is ample accommodation provided for opium-smokers: no attempt whatever is made to check it, nor could such an attempt succeed without ruining the company's passenger traffic. Canton is a city full of charitable organisations, and amongst these are several societies for put-

ting a stop to the vice of opium-smoking. The European missionaries there are also very active in this respect. In no part of China have the European and American medical missions been more successful than in Canton. The Cantonese, though very vain, are a much more gritty and self-respecting race than the Chinese of the north; and amongst them there are not only a large number of non-smokers, who are anxious to cure smokers, but there are many smokers who are most anxious to cure themselves. In the neighbouring British colony of Hong-Kong there is no attempt made to interfere with the liberty of the subject. Chinese may smoke as much opium as they like, when and where they will; but nowhere do I remember to have seen fewer traces of opium misery than in Hong-Kong. Life is too active, people are too busy, to smoke much of their time away: the people look better fed and more prosperous than on the mainland; and the same may be said of Saigon, Penang, and Singapore. This fact opens the question, May it not be from sheer weariness and want of something to do that many Chinese take to the opium-pipe? In most places in China organised gambling is forbidden. With the exception of an occasional game at shuttlecock or kite-flying—only at fixed seasons—there are no outdoor sports. The Chinese rarely walk for pleasure. As already stated, interiors are comfortless. There is no social intercourse between respectable men and women. There is not sufficient house-room, privacy, or light for reading after dark. How is time to be killed? I think that the monotony of existence may be one of the chief causes of opium-smoking. On the whole, though at Canton I was in contact with opium-smokers almost daily, and made a point of seeing as

much as possible of native life, the seamy side of opium-smoking did not obtrude itself much upon me. Just as in an English coast town one may daily see the flaring light of the gin-palace, the besotted faces of occasional loafers, the bedraggled garments, and infer therefrom great misery behind it all, so one might fairly infer great misery from the spectacle of numerous opium-dens, cadaverous faces, and tattered demalions in Canton, if one should see it; but I did not see it obtrusively, though, as I said before, I was daily poking my nose into all sorts of nooks and corners. Naturally a medical missionary will see a great deal more of the seamy side. It is his business.

I next spent a whole year in the true home of opium, the province of Sz Chuan, where in the winter season one may see growing hundreds of square miles of the poppy all at once. By boat and on foot, chiefly on foot, I travelled thousands of miles, averaging twenty-five miles a-day for at least six months, and taking in portions of the provinces of Kwei Chou and Hu Peh. I used to watch the girls and the children making incision into the poppy-bud, scraping off the pale juice into basins; then see the men carrying it to the village market; the dealers buying up the rapidly darkening mess by the ounce; the coolies marching off with loads of it on journeys of hundreds and even thousands of miles to other provinces, endeavouring to avoid the taxing stations on the way. In this province, though a great many people—I should say at least half—did not smoke at all, yet smoking was, so to speak, universal, and with many almost as much a matter of habit as taking food. Yet here, strange to say, where opium was so cheap and easily obtainable, and so com-

monly smoked, less harm seemed to be done than in places where the more expensive Indian drug is imported. This fact would seem to confirm what I have suggested, that it is rather the waste of money and time than any physical injury to the constitution which does the mischief. My first experience was with boatmen. I had about 50 permanent coolies attached to my own boat, besides from 50 to 200 specially engaged when there was a dangerous rapid to pass. These boatmen were a dissolute, devil-may-care, happy-go-lucky brood—apparently the scum of the province. In Sz Chuan, when a man has failed at everything else, he becomes a boatman—that is, for the time being a beast of burden. The pay is about 6d. or 1s. a-day, according to the rate of the sterling exchange (but in effect always about 1s., for low-priced silver is just as good as high-priced silver in China), plus three rice meals a-day, with a little pork, fish, or salt vegetables, plus an occasional “blow-out” of pork when a great danger is overcome, plus occasional “wine-money” from the passengers, plus an extra pecuniary reward if good speed is attained. The poor wretches, often clad in mere rags, work hard from sunrise to sunset, ropes round their bodies, heads bowed to the ground; now splashing in water, now clambering over rocks. It is a red-letter day for them when there is a fair wind and they can all huddle together for warmth, doing nothing but chatter whilst the boat sails along. My escorting mandarin and his servant both smoked opium. So did the captain and the pilot. The next important “official” was the galley-cook: he smoked too. About half the coolies would smoke whenever they got the chance, if they were able to buy, borrow, or beg the

opium. At the end of the journey their whole earnings went in a spree; and thus they went on, alternately slaving and spreeing, until consumption, cold, or drowning took them off. Life is cheap in the interior of China: it can be deliberately bought for a few shillings, and in any case it is so little valued that few make a fuss about losing it, so long as it is done in an ordinary way. Opium-indulgence does its share, doubtless, towards perpetuating poverty, recklessness, and misery amongst this class; but, so far as I could see, much the same sort of harum-scarum existence would have been led even without the opium. Although I walked a great deal, I always had six or eight chair-bearers with me, and I found that the two or three who smoked opium practically delayed me two or three hours a-day unless I kept a very sharp eye on them. Having once inhaled their opium, they were as capable of work as the others; but they were no good, or at least would do nothing, without it, and of course wasted time in buying it, preparing it, smoking it, and packing up their pipes. I used to very often dine with the city general, who still occupies high rank in the north-western provinces. He belonged to the “old school;”—that is, he pocketed more than half his men’s pay, knew nothing of war, and was a heavy opium-smoker. He always used to excuse himself, when dinner was half over, in order to take a few pipes of opium; then he would return. His wife smoked too. In appearance he was pale and rather “washed out,” but he could well afford the luxury, and as he must now be over sixty, cannot be much the worse for it. The civilian officials, with the exception of one who was an opium sot, all boasted of being abstainers, and truly. Even the sot, however,

was a capable official. My official servants were all smokers. My teacher was a Christian, and the Catholic missionaries took care that he did not smoke. The Protestant missionaries used to save would-be opium suicides almost daily; but suicide is a very common thing in China, and would probably be just as common if the opium were not at hand. Opium is selected because it is more comfortable than hanging or arsenic. In this province no Indian opium was ever used,—at least, with the exception of private consignments for very rich officials who had acquired the habit on the coast. As a rule, the villages, and of course the towns, were everywhere wealthy; food was plentiful and cheap; life comfortable,—for China,—and work abundant. Except in the large towns, no such sight as a cadaverous opium-besotted face was ever seen by me, though it is not difficult as a rule to discern from the tint of the cheek and the colour of the eyeball who smokes and who does not smoke. Opium may cause the usual waste of time, and to a certain extent of money, in this province, but it certainly brings wealth and activity. The poppy does not displace rice, but only cheap vegetable crops, or odds and ends of vegetables grown during the winter. It furnishes the material for a vast export, labour for armies of coolies or porters, a basis for local taxation, and employment for numbers of women and children. So far as I was able to judge from the unrivalled opportunities I had, opium could not fairly be described as a curse to the province of Sz Chuan, or to those portions of Kwei Chou and Hu Peh in which I saw it growing. Nor did I observe any strong feeling against its use; still less any feeling against Europeans

for having, as some still say, first introduced it. At the same time, no one was proud of being a smoker; every one made some coy attempt at apology or concealment. In short, even in Sz Chuan, where I believe much less harm is done by opium-smoking than is done by strong drink in Great Britain, the common-sense of the people prompts them to be more ashamed of their weakness than we are of ours. Never once in any part of China have I seen an opium-smoker take the angry and self-justificatory attitude which some of our advocates of free drink will do. My experience leads me to say that, however much opinions among the Chinese may differ as to who is responsible for the introduction of opium, what is the extent of the damage done, and so on, there is but one, absolutely one, opinion throughout the empire as to the wisdom of the indulgence; that is, it is a foolish vice, and one to be ashamed of and kept in the background, even though the person using the drug be too weak to resist its charm and to act up to his own opinions.

After my stay in Sz Chuan, I spent the best part of two years in the province of Cheh Kiang, travelling hundreds of miles on foot, both in that province and in that of Fuh Kien, passing through numerous poppy-fields in both, always living in native inns; being surrounded by native boatmen, coolies, soldiers, and officials; mixing with all classes, and of course hearing what the missionaries had to say. All missionaries, Catholic and Protestant, of course object to opium-smoking. It is worth noticing that though the Protestants are almost as universally opposed to the use of spirituous liquors, the Catholics are not so; which certainly supports the view that, though it may

not be so harmful to China as the abuse of drink is to Europe, opium-smoking is, in principle, considered a more shameful and degrading vice. It may be described as an unnatural vice,—its rival, drink, being after all but an appetite inseparable from human nature, and only harmful when taken to excess. My best official servant at Wenchow, as elsewhere, was an opium-smoker. Of the officials, only one was an opium-smoker, and he had the usual wan appearance; but he was quite capable, and his indulgence seemed in no way to affect his general health or business capacity. I am bound to record, however, that both in Cheh Kiang and Fuh Kien the evidences of misery caused by indulgence in expensive Indian opium seemed to me much plainer than elsewhere. My bearers were always half-starved, ragged ruffians, but almost always smokers. Often I reached a village where no fowls, eggs, or sugar were to be got, where not even rice was procurable; yet I invariably saw the inevitable garish lamp-sign with the equivalent for "Indian Opium" upon it. True, in the case of Cheh Kiang province, the parts I visited had been well-nigh depopulated during the Great Rebellion; but I took all that into consideration, and the definite impression was left upon me that money was universally wasted upon expensive opium by those who could least afford it: time was also of course wasted: poverty and misery undoubtedly resulted from it. There was no counter wealth or activity, as in Sz Chuan, to outweigh the incubus. From this cause (combined perhaps with other causes) the physique of the people was unmistakably deteriorating, and, in short, the use of opium might fairly be described as a popular curse. With slight varia-

tions, the same must be said of the northern half at least of Fuh Kien. Though in both provinces the native drug is produced, yet it is the Indian drug which is chiefly smoked, and which does nearly all the damage; but, I repeat, the damage is more an economical one than a physical one, and it is not fair to exaggerate the latter.

After leaving these parts, I had the opportunity of studying Japanese and Corean life in Corea. In that country, as in Japan, the importation and the use of opium are strictly forbidden (except by Chinese). I believe I can safely say that, as in Japan, so in Corea, no Japanese ever uses it. The easy-going Coreans may occasionally be seduced by the Chinese to use it, but I never came across a Corean smoker, and I used to mix a good deal with all classes of Coreans. The Corean physique is, at least so far as external appearance goes, far superior to that of the Chinese. The Japanese also, though shorter than the Chinese, are, man for man, of sterner and sturdier stuff. Japan and Corea both have their weak points, but opium is not yet one of them; and though there may be no direct evidence in favour of ascribing the superior Corean physique to the absence of opium-smoking, there can be little doubt that the introduction of opium-smoking would seriously injure that physique, and make the people much poorer than they already are, because they would spend less upon their food.

The popular notion that opium-smoking cannot be suddenly abandoned without danger is quite mistaken. The inmates of the Hong-Kong prisons are never allowed to smoke a single pipe. True, advanced cases are treated for a time with pills or anti-opium medicines; but that is all. So long as physical force or the requisite force of will is at

hand, any smoker can be cured of the habit summarily.

My next experience was the neighbourhood of Foochow, where at different times I spent the best part of three years. The general impression left upon me was that opium-smoking did more damage here than in the Canton region. The people are more voluptuously inclined, less principled, less capable of resisting temptation, not so industrious and persevering, dirtier, and poorer. I can therefore well understand the missionaries of Foochow taking a much stronger view than would be justified in Sz Chuan.

After this I spent more than two years in the island of Hainan, where I must say I noticed very little of the evil effect so marked at Foochow: yet it is certain that at least 2000 chests a-year must be consumed in the island. The civil governor was a strong anti-opium man, and used frequently to abuse me almost officially for belonging to a nation which had (he said) corrupted China with opium. Notwithstanding this, however, he encouraged the opium-smuggling trade at the expense of the legitimate trade, and, when he left, his successor got into trouble for peculating the opium revenue. This second man was a great smoker, and bore strong marks of it upon his features. The other officials did not smoke. My chief official servant was a smoker: his official salary was 12s. a-month: out of this 3d. a-day, or 7s. 6d. a-month, went in opium: he paid 10d. a week for a rather good house, and kept a wife and child on the remainder. Of course, in order to feed his family it would have been necessary for him to "squeeze" unless I had assisted him; so, as he was really a useful and intelligent man, I allowed him 8s. a-month out of my

own pocket. None of the other *employés* smoked opium, but their combined intelligence was not equal to his alone. I took him with me several times to the French colonies, and there he was obliged for economy's sake to swallow pills, as his pipe would have been confiscated had he imported ever so little opium, whilst the price of French opium was prohibitive.

In Tonquin it appeared to me that the excessively high price of opium caused unusual waste and poverty. Here, for the first time, I came across Europeans who smoked, and it is a well-authenticated fact, which I have frequently myself seen discussed in the local French journals, that considerable numbers of Frenchmen have taken to the habit: from what I could learn, it affects them even more prejudicially than it does the Chinese.

In Java opium is so expensive that the poorer Chinese have to smoke a sort of base mixture, often merely soaked in opium refuse. The Dutch are even stricter than the French, and the rapacious Chinese opium-farmers who buy the right of monopoly cause a great deal of misery in various ways. I spent a year in Burma, where the interests of the indigenous race are carefully safeguarded by the paternal Indian Government. Very little if any harm is allowed to be done to the Burmese, whether by spirits or by opium. The Chinese are, as usual, permitted to please themselves, and are generally the concessionaries of opium and spirit monopolies; but I noticed no misery traceable to opium in Burma, and found that the better classes of Chinese were even disposed to favour a gradual curtailment if not an ultimate suppression of the opium traffic. In Siam the

Chinese have a perfectly free hand in regard to opium, but I did not observe that they abused it. In Australia and the United States I did not remark anything worthy of special notice in connection with opium. I found that Chinamen did all they wanted to do on the sly, and that the European or white authorities were only too glad to leave them alone.

It is distinctly stated in the official Chinese records that there were 400,000,000 people in China fifty years ago. If we therefore take 100,000,000 adults, and assume that each smokes the very small allowance of a Chinese pound weight a-year, that would make one million chests. But 50,000 chests of Indian opium are really much nearer the mark; so that not one in twenty adults can possibly smoke even this exceedingly innocuous allowance. I believe the best authorities put the consumption of native opium at about four times that of Indian. Even then, only one quarter of the total number of adults can smoke this infinitesimal allowance. There can be no question that many sad cases of abuse occur. Medical and other missionaries naturally see more of the injury done than others, because those injured go to them for relief. One medical missionary in Canton told me that he had operated some thousand times (I think) for stone in the bladder; but of course outsiders hear very little of such matters. In the same way, so far as opium-smoking is concerned, the casual observer sees very little of the horrors which undoubtedly do occasionally take place. On the other hand, which of us is not a frequent witness in the cities of Great Britain to the ruin and misery caused by excessive indulgence in strong drink? From what I have personally ob-

served, in a casual way, of drink on the one hand and opium on the other, though I entertain no positive opinion, and plead for no particular view, the impression left upon me is very distinct that opium does much less harm to the Chinese than drink does to us, so far as inciting to acts of violence, neglect of family, &c., are concerned. The greatest smokers do not appear to spend upon their opium the proportionate sum of their earnings which our working population spends upon its liquor. Our liquor costs 40,000,000 of us several hundred millions a-year; whilst 50,000 chests at £100 apiece, and 200,000 chests at £50 apiece, would only make £15,000,000 a-year among 400,000,000 people. Opium-smoking causes no violence, incites to no crime, unless perhaps it be to stealing the means for a smoke. It is a sensual pleasure pure and simple, and certainly does no good to the constitution, though, if taken in moderation, it may do little harm: in the sense that it allays pain and kills wearisome time, it may even be said to do occasional good, just as morphia does with us. But how is it all Chinese are ashamed of it; or, if not, why do they all try to conceal it or apologise for it? No one of us thinks of apologising for drink, so long as it is not taken to excess, or in disobedience to lawful injunctions, or against some generally accepted scruple or pledge. It appears to me that the one is the indulgence of a reasonable appetite which becomes wasteful and injurious when carried to excess, whilst the other is the indulgence of an artificial or unnatural appetite which is always wasteful even when not carried to excess, and which becomes injurious when persisted in, inasmuch as it checks the population. But the unnaturalness of opium-

smoking is not greater than that of tobacco-smoking, and that alone is hardly sufficient to condemn it. A French gentleman, Dr Martin, has recently published an elaborate work to prove that moderate opium-smoking does but little if any harm; and, subject to what I have said, I am disposed to agree with him. However, having recounted my experiences, I leave the public to draw conclusions for itself.

P.S.—Since the above was written, I have read a leading article in the chief native Chinese newspaper, the 'Shên Pao' of Shanghai, dated the 29th December 1895. This paper circulates widely all over the Empire. After pointing out that the 1861 Treaty agreement to tax opium prevented China from prohibiting its import from India, the writer goes on to say that for a score or more of years past it has been the policy of the Chinese Government to stop the outward drain of silver by encouraging the planting of the poppy in China. He points to Yün Nan, Sz Chuan, and Shan Si as the provinces where its cultivation takes place on a wholesale scale; but he adds that there are three or four "quotations" of other qualities produced in the coast provinces of Kiang Nan and Chêh Kiang. Within the last year or two, moreover, it has been extensively grown at P'utung, quite close to Shanghai. He says that his inquiries at all the treaty ports lead him to the conclusion that comparatively few people, even there, smoke the Indian drug,—indeed they cannot afford it: the injury done by foreign opium is light compared with the enormous damage caused by the native article. In the country districts it is getting commoner and commoner for the peasant to kill

tedious time on wet days by stretching himself on a couch and smoking the opium which he or his neighbour grows so cheaply. Even in Canton province, where scarcely any opium has ever been grown, a man recently petitioned the authorities for permission to cultivate it wholesale in the neighbourhood of the city of Canton itself. His arraignment for treason during the late rebellion (consequent on the Japanese war) was the cause of the project falling through. It is therefore unfair to attempt to lay all the blame on foreigners: the only reasonable course is for China to prohibit the cultivation of opium in her own dominions. Thus speaks the Chinese editor.

As an interesting corollary upon the above, I may also cite a memorial to the Emperor—which is printed in the same newspaper—from the Viceroy of Kan Suh. Owing to the recent Mussulman rebellion twenty-seven departments have been partially desolated: he asks the Emperor's consent to waive the tax on the poppy in those twenty-seven. The tax is stated to be one mace or six-tenths of a mace the plot (equal to about 2s. 6d. and 1s. 9d. the English acre, at present silver rates).

Once more, the same newspaper describes a new scheme of the Viceroy Chang Chih tung of Nan-king for raising funds by taxing the right to boil opium in Shanghai itself. I am inclined to think, however, this scheme will clash with the agreement of February 1887, under which China was to refrain from further taxation in consideration of England's consenting to pay *likin* on opium at the same time as import duty.

Lastly, I have recently received a copy of the new native opium-taxing rules for An Hwei province.

EDWARD HARPER PARKER.

OUR VILLAGE ELEVEN.

I WAS unanimously elected Captain of the Sharnbrook village XI. for sundry good and sufficient reasons, of which perhaps the best and most sufficient was that I was one of the only two adult members of the club who had the slightest idea where to place the field. The other possible candidate was our curate, and he certainly had good claims, inasmuch as he had been twice to Lords, and it was commonly reported that either he himself, or in any case his father, had once shaken hands with the illustrious Fuller Pilch. But though our curate was deservedly popular in the parish, it was felt that if he was called upon to manage the side there might be a certain delicacy about his taking off or putting on some of our change bowlers. For example, one Abe Hollowell, who bowled really good grubs on occasion, was not only, like two or three other members of the side, a dissenter, but was even regarded as a prospective rival preacher.

"Talk of your parsons indeed," once remarked old Job Billing, the Radical cobbler; "why, they tells me that, if he had a mind to, young Abe Hollowell could preach 'em inside out."

Then again, 'Lijah Tomkins, who "threwed overhand," and, as he cheerfully acknowledged, did not much care what he hit as long as it sounded, could not be exactly classified with Cæsar's ideal wife as a person with a character above suspicion. A stone-mason by profession, and, when he cared to work, capable—so said his admirers—of laying two courses of bricks while any other man in the country-side was laying one, 'Lijah was by choice the idlest vagabond in the

parish. Without being a drunkard he was a constant devotee of the public-house, and a rigid abstainer from church or any other place of worship. Our curate had many a passage of arms with him on the subject, but it is to be doubted whether the kindly efforts to bring 'Lijah to a better frame of mind were much aided by the uninvited assistance of Mrs 'Lijah, who was at once a slattern and a shrew.

"Times out o' number I tells him, sir, as he'll have to go there some day whether he will or no," remarked the amiable helpmeet.

"Seems to me as I've been there onst too often a'ready," retorted Elijah, winking at his spiritual adviser.

"And when I looked at the woman, I'm afraid that I thought the same," added the curate by way of parenthesis, as he told me the story.

As a cricketer 'Lijah had a great local reputation, having on one occasion figured in the ranks of a local XXII. which had opposed the All England XI. The fact that 'Lijah had not only played in the "Grand Match," but had actually been put on to bowl and had "houted" one of the All England men, was held to have reflected great credit on the parish. There was even some talk of getting up a testimonial to the successful cricketer, but I fancy that it stopped short at a few stray pints of ale. It may not be out of place to give 'Lijah's own version of the incident. I used to hear him tell the story of his doughty deeds year after year at our cricket dinners, and the dialogue—for this was the form that the narrative took—varied so little from time to time, that I have come to the con-

clusion that 'Lijah and his interlocutor must have rehearsed the scene pretty often beforehand. In the matter of story-telling our Sharnbrook folks were eminently conservative.

Interlocutor. Now then, 'Lijah, tell us how you bowled out the man in the All England match.

Elijah (with feigned reluctance). Why, I minds as I told yer last year; you don't want to hear it again, do yer?

Inter. Yes, us does. We've forgotten it a'most.

Eli. (after clearing his throat.) Well, it wor just like this. There was two of them jolly well stuck, and none of our chaps couldn't part 'em not nohow. Well, at last up to me comes Master —; you minds him, don't yer, Jake? a little spotty-faced, dunderheaded chap, wot they says once played for Hoxford. "Will you bowl a hover, Mr Tomkies?" says he. "Right you are, mate," says I: "give us hold on her," and with that I fetches out Hatkinson fust ball.

Inter. No, did yer really, though? How wor it, 'Lijah?

Eli. How wor it! it wor hout, I tell yer—sharp enough.

Inter. What, did yer bowl him?

Eli. Yes, I bowled he fair—in the heye.

Inter. How wor he out, then? Hadn't got his head afore wicket, had he?

Eli. Not as I knows on, but he were knocked wellnigh silly, and hout he went, and didn't come in again neither.

Inter. But whatever were he at that he let you hot him, 'Lijah, instead of his hotting you?

Eli. He said he were taking block or summat; but hout he went, and didn't offer to come in no more, same as I told yer. And then they gces and puts in the paper as how he retired hurt, and

never said as it were acos Mr Tomkies hurt him; and they never asked me to bowl again neither, so I jolly well come home. Retired! he never retired, I tell yer. It was I as druv him out.

Johnnie Dawes the carpenter was a very useful man on our side. He had a bat of his own—there were only three private-property bats in the Club—and maugre all his protestations to the contrary, a good many of us believed that he made it himself. At any rate, even if the owner's version was correct, and the bat was a family heirloom, I am convinced to this day that it was manufactured at some period or other in the Sharnbrook carpenter's shop, which had been occupied by the Dawes family for several generations. I tried it myself at practice one day, and of some hundred cricket-bats that I have handled in my life, I can safely aver that I never found a single specimen which drove less or stung more than the Dawes' family relic. The worthy fellow rather resented my carefully worded suggestion that the old bit of wood had seen its best day.

"I don't know much about her driving nor her riding neither, Master George. All I knows is that she's all right as long as you holds her square."

And indeed, as Dawes was a rigid blocker, and generally contrived to block the ball with his thumb, the driving power of the bat was a matter of minor importance. Armed with this doughty weapon, Johnnie always went in first in our matches, and I have more than once seen him stay in for a whole hour by the clock and score ten to fifteen runs all off his thumb. As he could neither run nor throw, he generally fielded point, where once or twice in a season he would bring off a sen-

sational catch. By far the most sensational of these was the catch he made on that never-to-be-forgotten occasion when the vicar was standing umpire. Tom Rowley, the umpire *par excellence* of the neighbourhood, had sent up a message on the day before a match to the effect that he was laid by with "a boil in an okkerd place, and would be glad if some one else would referee." After racking my brains to find a substitute, I could think of no one except the vicar, who had been a cricketer of some merit in his younger days, and always took a warm interest in the success of our Club. The old gentleman kindly consented to officiate, but his excessive conscientiousness indubitably lost us the match. A crisis had, so we flattered ourselves, just passed. For the great gun of the opposition, a hard-hitting left-handed batsman, was caught in a most painful manner by Dawes, who was fielding short-leg for the nonce, and having received a very sharp low hit in the pit of the stomach, had been so literally doubled up that the ball had stuck. There were loud shouts of applause from our supporters: Johnnie threw himself on the ground, where he lay gasping for breath, and the batsman, not a little disgusted at the stroke of bad luck, was preparing to retire when the vicar, after a momentary fumbling in his pocket, thus addressed me:—

"I am very sorry, George, to have made so careless a mistake, but on feeling in my pocket I find that there are seven half-crowns, so that that must have been the seventh ball of the over, and perhaps under the circumstances I should only be doing what is fair if I were to say 'Not out.' There being, you observe, only six balls to the over, the seventh ball can hardly be accounted as having

been a ball at all. However, I am quite willing to leave the matter in your hands."

I looked at the batsman, and he looked at me: then after a pause I said, "Well, what do you feel inclined to do?"

"Well, governor," was the reply, "as you puts it like that, I think I'd just as lieve stay where I am. I shouldn't like to go against what the Reverend says; and of course if, as he says, it weren't not exactly a ball at all, then it were a no-ball. You and me'll have a drink along o' this presently, Johnnie."

And so he remained master of the situation, and in the end won the match for his side. Johnnie Dawes' comments at the time teemed with indignation.

"And I wish the Reverend had had it in his own stummick, that I do. He'd have known sharp enow then as how it were a ball, and a blooming hard ball too. Now, don't yer ever ask him to stand again, Master George, or I'm blarmed if I catches 'em."

In after-years, however, Johnnie made a very good story of it, never failing to take full credit to himself for having placed himself exactly where the ball was likely to come, and generally appealing to myself to back his statement.

"Well, it were just like this. Mr George he were there, and seed it all. There were a plaguey long-legged covey in as allers made a power of runs if you didn't jest happen to know where to catch he. Well, I knows all along where she'd be likely to come, so I jest puts myself there, and Abe Hollowell, he jest bowls the very ball as I wants, and he hits her with all his might, and I jest catches her like so, Mr George, didn't I?" Here came a sort of pantomimic performance, and the story ended with, "And it were then as the Reverend went and

gave him in, and we lost the match, and I doesn't go to church not for two Sundays."

Poor old Johnnie Dawes! he has long since been gathered to his fathers, but the fame of his catch, and the way "he took it out o' t' parson," are still among the oft-told tales in the cricket circles of Sharnbrook.

So far I have only paid a passing tribute to the merits of our curate. The Rev. Thomas Browning was an excellent parish priest, and, so at least I have been informed on the highest authority, thoroughly orthodox in his Church views, albeit he played cricket with a very crooked bat.

"He ain't not exactly what you wouldn't call a Horator, Mr George," remarked the vicarage gardener, who was also by a happy coincidence our parish-clerk, and by virtue of his double capacity had as good an opinion of his own judgment in ecclesiastical matters as any Dogberry, "but I accounts as he preaches Gospel, and what do a man want more?"

What, indeed! And yet in the face of this encomium, and in despite of the fact, moreover, that our curate's innate modesty led him to disparage his own performances as a cricketer, to this day I maintain that he felt much more at home out in the deep field than in the pulpit, and he was certainly a harder hitter as a batsman than as a preacher. The bounty of Nature had supplied him with abnormally large feet and hands, and it seemed almost impossible for a catch in the country to fall out of the latter receptacles, as many an opponent who hit "hard and high and often" found to his cost. I can vividly recollect his manifest disconcertment when a jolly old farmer, a keen supporter of our Club, and the parish churchwarden to boot, thus addressed him as we

were returning to the tent at the end of our fielding:—

"Bravo, Mr Browning, bravo! I says. You've done 'em fine to-day. I'd just a-been a-telling of some of them Wellesden chaps, You mind as you don't hit 'em in the air, my boys, or I'm d——d if our parson won't catch you; and begging your pardon, sir, but d——d if you didn't."

"You're very kind, I'm sure, Mr Smithson, but please moderate your language."

"Lor' bless your heart, Mr Browning, don't mind me—it's only my way of speaking, and you knows well enough as I don't mean nothing by it. If you'd 'a really wanted to hear swearing, you should 'a come and listened to one of they chaps you caught. But I count it don't matter to you what any Wellesden chap says. Just you come and have a bit of supper along of us to-night, and I'll put a half-suvrin in t' bag on Sunday as you can set off agin any of those words as had a d—— in 'em."

One other member of our XI. merits some special description, and that was Rhoddiss Reesby, the owner of the cricket-field. I will not go so far as to say that there was any written agreement to the effect that Rhoddiss should be entitled to a place in the team so long as he gave us the land rent-free. But on the one hand it was sound policy on our part to play a man who showed so much right feeling in the matter; and on the other, not only Rhoddiss himself, but his pretty little wife, a whole quiverful of small Reesbys, and a goodly crowd of retainers, would have been wofully disappointed if the Sharnbrook XI. had been made up without him. Moreover, quite apart from his liberality as a landlord, Rhoddiss was an uncommonly useful man to have on one's side

in a rustic match. A colossus in size, though beaming with good-nature, he was well known to be extremely handy with his fists, and as he was always on the side of law and order, his presence in the cricket-field was not only a restraining influence on 'Lijah Tomkins and other potentially turbulent members of our XI., but also ensured a certain amount of respect on the part of opponents for a side which contained a champion reputed to be capable of taking on any three men in the neighbourhood. As a *bonâ fide* cricketer I cannot recall that Rhoddiss excelled in any particular department of the game, but he was always ready to go anywhere and do anything; and as a pair of long butcher-boots constituted an essential part of his cricketing costume, his services were occasionally enlisted as long-stop when 'Lijah was put on to bowl. In this position he never went through the formality of attempting to stop the ball with his hands, but after it had hit one of his boots he managed to gather it with great rapidity, and threw it, if occasion arose, so hard that few batsmen after one experiment thought it worth while to risk their lives for the sake of stealing a run.

"For goodness' sake, sir, look out where you're throwing to," exclaimed a rash Oxonian, who, holding the old theory that there was always a run between the wicket-keeper and a long-stop who did not take the ball clean at once, proceeded to carry it into practice,—"you only just missed my head."

"I looks where I throws all right when folks stand still. It only goes agin their heads when they flusters me a-running."

Once and again at long intervals in the course of our fielding Rhoddiss would approach me and whisper confidentially in my ear,

"I'd as lieve bowl a over if it's quite convenient, Master George," and I generally contrived to meet his wishes. I am rather of the opinion that he imagined that the delivery of an over by the owner of the ground was a graceful act of hospitality towards the opposing side; for I never recollect his preferring the request in any match away from home. I am safe at any rate in saying that if it was meant for a compliment, it was a compliment of which most batsmen showed due appreciation. He took a very long run when he bowled, aiming with the ball held close up to his eye, and by way of ensuring the batsman's attention, always shouted "Game!" in a stentorian voice exactly as he delivered the ball. And it was to this excessive fairness on his part that Rhoddiss owed the only wicket that I ever saw him take. The unfortunate victim was a neighbouring parson, one of the best cricketers who ever played on our ground. He had been in for some time, and was just beginning to look dangerous, when Rhoddiss claimed his privilege of bowling an over; and as a change of some sort was advisable, I thought that the over, which savoured something of the nature of a *bisque* to the opposite party, might as well come then as at any other time. Never was the old maxim, that even a bad change of bowling is better than no change, better exemplified. Rhoddiss went through the usual preliminaries, and so effectually startled the batsman by shouting "Game!" at the critical moment, that the latter involuntarily drew back from his wicket as if to refuse the ball, then apparently thought better of it, played at it after a hesitating fashion, and was clean bowled by a full pitch on the middle stump. He looked rather crestfallen, but

accepted the situation good-humouredly enough.

"I thought that you wanted to say something to me, sir," he remarked, as he passed the bowler on his way back to the tent.

"And I said *summat*," replied Rhoddia. "I said 'Game,' and game it were."

We often hear the expression, "No one more astonished than the striker," but on that occasion I take it that the bowler was far more astonished than the striker—as astonished possibly as John Ridd was at being suddenly knighted. But though the unexpected achievement was greeted by his *clientèle* with loud applause, neither on that nor on any other occasion did Rhoddia evince the slightest inclination to try another over.

Our side was filled up by an usher and two or three of the bigger lads from a commercial school which had been established at what was by courtesy called the Squire's House. Inasmuch as none of this contingent were what we may call

"Rightful aborigines, true sons of Mother Earth,"

or were, in other words, Sharnbrook born and bred, they need no lengthy description, though it is only fair to say that the boys did us yeoman service more than once. The usher was a red-faced and bull-necked individual of the hard-hitting and hard-throwing order, who dropped almost as many catches as he did *h's*, which is saying a good deal. He was by no means a bad sort of fellow, and the boys told me that he was popular in the school. But he was a rigid disciplinarian, and to this day there stands staring me in the face the following entry in our scoring-book:—

Godson,	} sent to bed by Mr Ball.
Manning,	
Gardiner,	

I cannot at this remote period recall the special act of insubordination which cost us the services of three valuable members of our side in the second innings of a match which we eventually lost by a few runs. But the fatal announcement remains there still as it was entered by our scorer at the time, and so long as the pages of the dear old book hold together it will remain on record that those three individuals, Godson, Manning, and Gardiner, who, if they are still alive, are elderly and, as we may hope, prosperous citizens, were sent to bed in the middle of a match instead of being allowed to have a second innings. It is unfortunate for Mr Ball that he should himself have been credited with 0, 0, in the same match, as it might be inferred that his temper was likely to have been rather shorter than usual on that fateful afternoon. But though the summary dismissal of the lads to bed was certainly *post hoc*, we will hope that it was not really *propter hoc*. The form of punishment for youths of sixteen or seventeen sounds rather ludicrous to modern ears; and even now, as I think of that lost match, I could wish that Mr Ball had either tempered justice with mercy or had inflicted a less inconvenient form of punishment.

Roughly and in outline I have attempted to portray the members of the XI. which, under my captaincy, did duty for the old village for several consecutive seasons. It remains to attempt to give some idea of our umpire or referee, for by the latter designation old Tom preferred to be called. The Rowleys of Sharnbrook were one of the oldest families in the county, and had been lords of the manor from time immemorial. Tradition said that in the dark ages to them had belonged the privilege of

hanging any refractory villagers on the venerable oak of which little more than the shell still remained in the Park close. And unless the morals of the inhabitants of Sharnbrook had sensibly deteriorated in these latter days, the privilege might have been freely exercised with much benefit to society, and we may add that a little judicious blending of suicides on the part of the overlords might also have improved matters. For, if local traditions are to be relied upon, there had been a good many shady specimens in the Rowley family, and the superannuated parish-clerk, who had fought at Trafalgar in his young days, could tell some queer stories about Tom Rowley's more immediate predecessors. Indeed, Tom himself had rather disappointed public expectations as to what a Rowley ought to be, by turning out a highly respectable member of society.

"Why, Lor' bless ye, Master George, young Tom"—*young Tom* was at that time about sixty years old—"he ain't a patch on what the old gentleman wor, no, nor his grandfeyther neither. Why, I ain't a-seen him not once in his life not what you'd call fresh even, while the old man he'd be drunk wellanigh a week at a time; and to hear him swear too, it were summat like swearin' that were. Man and boy, I've never heard young Tom use but one d——n in his life, and that were onny acos he were kicked in the stomach by a cow and sat in a muck-heap."

So said the old sailor, and if the swearing powers of the two previous lords of the manor had satisfied *him*, they must have been something quite out of the common run. Tom's mother, so my informant told me, had been a quiet and more or less refined sort of woman, and it was owing

to her influence that he had received a better education than his forefathers had had before him. And to a certain extent he had profited by this departure from the ordinary tenets of the family. For though his best friend could not have described Tom Rowley as a cultured man, what he did know he knew thoroughly well, and a very quaintly assorted conglomeration of knowledge it was. In the first place, he had an intimate acquaintance with the facts, characters, and phraseology, of the Old Testament. Then again he was more thoroughly conversant with the diseases as well as with the habits and customs of horses, dogs, and other domestic animals, than any veterinary surgeon that I ever met. Finally,—and this was very much to our purpose,—without ever having excelled as a cricketer, he knew more about the rules and even the knotty points of the game than do the majority of our professional umpires.

In order to convey to the reader's mind some idea of Tom Rowley's personal appearance, I cannot do better than quote the description which the vicar once gave of him in my presence.

"What sort of a man is Tom Rowley to look at? Well, he's something like a colonel on half-pay, and something like a game-keeper."

And for eleven months in the year the vicar's description would have held good. The upright carriage, and the bronzed yet not uncomely face, with the thick grizzled moustache, might well have belonged to an old soldier; but the dress would have been wholly suggestive of the game-keeper had it not been for the shockingly rusty and battered hat, which any respectable keeper would have thrown into the nearest ditch.

I have purposely stated that it was only for eleven months in each year that Tom, had he been properly dressed, might have passed for a retired officer. But for a few weeks in the spring a short stubby growth on the chin, which never quite attained the proportions of a beard, entirely spoilt his military appearance. And it was only when one day I happened to meet him walking down the road with a razor in his hand, and questioned him as to the use he intended to make of it, that I found out that he always docked his lambs' tails with that article of toilet. My suggestion that he might just as well use another razor, if a razor was necessary at all, gave rise to something like a theological discussion.

"A merciful man is merciful to his beast, Master George, and lambs and other critters has their feelings as well as me and you."

"I don't see that that is any reason why you should not keep a razor on purpose for it."

"Well, that's just where you're wrong, then. You minds what David said when they wanted him to use another man's tools to kill the giant with. 'I ain't a proved them,' says he; nor I ain't proved no other razor. Man and boy, I've shaved with this old un for nigh on to forty years, just as long as they Israelites was a-messing around in the wilderness, and cut the lambs' tails and all. And I ain't one of them as is blown about by every blast of vain doctrine, so I shall go and change my habits no more than the leopard do his spots or the Ethiopian his skin."

"Do you ever look in the glass at this time of year, Mr Rowley?"

"Maybe I do, and maybe I don't. But don't you go for to be setting yourself up as one of them as judges by the outward

appearance, Master George, or you'll be passing over many a man as goes a-shepherding. How do you know as David didn't cut his lambs' tails with his razor? Not as I'm one of them as makes much account of David. He were as mean as you makes 'em now and again, and how a man as done what he done was a man after God's own heart allus licks me holler."

"Oh, come," I remarked, "he had great merits if he had great faults."

"Ah, well, if so be as he's a friend of yours I'll say no more. But you'll mind, Master George, when you talks about my not shaving, as your friend David he never washed nor shaved neither that time as his kiddy were a-dying."

And with this parting shot Tom went on his way to operate upon his lambs, with the air of a man who has had the best of an argument.

As an umpire Tom's reputation for fairness and knowledge of the game stood high in the neighbourhood, and even among a commonly perverse and gainsaying people it was seldom that a man had the hardihood to cavil at his decisions. Indeed, so far as cricket in our parts was concerned, he might well have said, like the immortal Grummer, that his name was Law. On the whole, it might be fairly claimed that though our local matches were keenly contested, and either side was most anxious to win, they were—as village cricket goes—what may be called friendly games; and although a certain amount of rough chaff and badinage went on, there were fewer disputes and less ill-feeling than is sometimes the case in rustic matches. Only once in the course of my connection with Sharnbrook cricket

did Tom Rowley think it necessary "to take the floor" and give the opposition umpire a bit of his mind. It was probably the longest consecutive speech that our lord of the manor ever uttered in his life, and we all felt at the time that he had fully risen to the occasion. It was when, for some unaccountable reason, in the time-honoured fixture *Sharnbrook v. Barnbrook* the opposition had enlisted the services of a professional umpire. We could not help regarding it as an unfriendly action on the part of our old-time adversaries thus to attempt to steal a march upon us; and notwithstanding our confidence in old Tom's prestige, and our readiness to back his decisions against those of a paid man, we felt that the presence of a real professional cricketer was, to say the least of it, rather a damper upon the proceedings. There were signs of friction early in the day when the stranger, who was evidently anxious to show off his superior knowledge, began to criticise the crease.

"Now what do you call that for a crease, Mr Umpire?" he inquired, pointing to Johnnie Dawes' handiwork and addressing Tom.

"Well, we calls it a poppin' crease down these parts," was the quiet reply.

"Well, but who ever seed such a crease drawn?"

"Why, I have many a time. What's wrong of it?"

"Why, it's too broad by a lot. A man could stand in the middle of it with all his foot, and where are ye then?"

"There ain't many men down these parts as could," retorted Tom; "but maybe folk is a bit narrower in the foot and longer in the tongue where you come from. But look here, young man, we don't want to have no words

about it. If you don't like our crease, just you learn us how to make a better. There's the whitin'-pot all ready."

"It ain't my business to make your creases," replied the man, sulkily.

"Well, then, you've no call to find fault with them as other folks make, and so you'll have to do the best you can with it."

But the real tug of war came late in the day when, with one wicket to fall, Barnbrook only wanted two runs to win the match.

"No-ball," suddenly yelled the professional, as Abe Hollowell delivered a medium-pace underhand lob.

"I chucked it fair enough," exclaimed the indignant Abe, who had probably never bowled a no-ball in his life. And at the same time came a stentorian appeal, "How's that, Umpire?" emanating from Rhoddie Reesby at the other end. For our wicket-keeper's hands being sore, Rhoddie in his butcher-boots had taken his place for a few overs. And as the no-ball was called, the big hitter of the Barnbrook XI. had run down the pitch, taken a wild swipe, and missed the ball, which had rebounded off one of the butcher-boots into the wicket.

"Out!" said Tom, "and we've drawn the match," and with that he walked up to the wicket and pocketed the bails.

"Here, I say, mister, I called it no-ball," shouted the other umpire.

"I thought as you said no-ball your end, but I've give him out down here."

"But a man can't be stumped off a no-ball."

"Nobody ever said as he could be stumped, not as I knows on," replied Tom,—"he were run out."

"But he never hit the ball."

"But it touched him, and that's pretty nigh as good, I reckon. Didn't see it, did you say?" as the man attempted to expostulate. "Perhaps you was too much took up over watching Abe's foot. Anyhow he's out, and we've drawn the match."

"Well, I'm d——d!" exclaimed the umpire.

"Ah, very like," rejoined Tom; and the general laugh, echoed even by the Barnbrook contingent, who had grace enough to feel a little ashamed at their *protégé's* barefaced attempt to win on a foul, would have convinced a less angry man than the professional that he was likely to find himself in a minority. As it was, he held his tongue for a minute, and then suddenly broke out into a volley of abuse.

"Well," he said, "I've seen many a sort of a cricket-match, but never not in all my born days did I ever see such a set-out as this here to call itself a match—a ground like a 'ay-field, a crease like a bloomin' fender, and the duffinest lot of cricketers as don't know a bat from a mop-andle."

It was then that Tom Rowley was fairly put upon his mettle, and, as Johnnie Dawes expressed it, "dressed t'other chap down proper."

"Look you here, young man," he said, gravely, "and what might your name be?"

"I'm Brown of Burnham," and the man seemed to imply by his tone that it argued gross ignorance on Tom's part not to have at once recognised so important a personage.

"Ah! Brown of Burnham you calls yourself. Well, and you might be Brown of Blue Blazes for all I knows or cares. Not that I've not heard tell of Burnham, and I won't say as there

mayn't be some decent folks as lives there, and"—this with the air of a man who feels that he is making an important concession—"there might happen to be some decent folks called Brown, though the only Brown as I ever knowed in those parts was a loafing, poaching, rat-catching sort of a chap. But"—here he raised his voice as he warmed to his subject—"be you Brown of Burnham, or Brown of Blue Blazes, or Brown of Bohemia, I don't see as you've got any particular call to come to Sharnbrook, nor to Barnbrook neither, to learn us cricket. I'll tell 'ee what it is, Mr Brown of Burnham, we don't want no outsiders interfering in our matches, nor refereeing neither. Old neighbour Squires, he and me we've refereed in this match long afore you was born, my boy"—here I fear that Tom was rather drawing the long-bow,—“and we've never wanted no Burnham blokes, nor no Browns, to tell us nothing. We gave and took fair and square, and never bore no malice nor hatred in our hearts, and if so be as one on us happened to make a slip like, why, t'other made one too, and it all come right in the end, and no harm done. But now I reckons, Mr Brown of Burnham, as they give you maybe five bob for this here job, and perhaps another five bob on the top of it if you winned the match for them. Well, now, I'm a fair man and true and just, so I hopes at least, in all my dealings, and so as you mayn't go and say as I've took the bread out of your mouth, here's your five bob;” here he threw two half-crowns on the table, and then lowering his voice, continued, “and if you was to take my advice, you'll take yourself back to where you come from, and that quick-stick. For if I were to give the

office, our Sharnbrook lads would have you in the horse-pond, and send you off so as no Browns nor no Burnhams wouldn't know you. There was a chap in the Bible, mark you, as didn't go home just as he were told, and he ran up against a lion. We ain't got no lions down hereabouts as I knows on, but we makes plaguey thick boots in Sharnbrook, and we've got a lot of chaps as knows how to use them."

Amid the loud applause with which this speech was received

the man Brown had the good sense to gather up the half-crowns in a shamefaced manner, and half touching his hat to the donor, to shamble off the field. That was the first and, to my knowledge, last occasion on which the shadow of professionalism ever fell upon our cricket at Sharnbrook. I have played since those days in matches of a more ambitious type, but my thoughts will often wander back to those primitive games in which Abe and 'Lijah bowled and old Tom stood referee.

PHANTASIES.

I.

The Poet closed his eyes, and lay supinely
 Upon his faded couch, in cheerless room;
 A flush was on his cheek,—he dreamed divinely,
 Despite the outer fog, the inner gloom!
 The pale sad Past dissolved in shadowy distance;
 A train of rosy Hours before him spread:
 O, this was Life indeed,—not mere existence,
 Merged in the petty strife for daily bread!

II.

The Minions of his Fancy thronged to flatter;
 In all their fairest guise they hovered there:
 They brought him luscious fruit on leafy platter,
 And sparkling ruddy wines from vintage rare;
 Upon his youthful brow—too early clouded!—
 They twined a wreath of laurel, and they said
 That Fame did wait without,—that, all-unshrouded,
 His Genius-fires might burn, on Gladness fed!

III.

They plumed their dazzling wings, and gaily bore him
 Where he had often sighed, in vain, to be:
 A tropic ocean rose, and smiled before him,
 And in its crystal waters he could see
 The bloom of sea-born flowers,—the Mermaids' dishes
 Of pink and pearly shells, in bright array;
 And round the coral-boughs the dainty fishes,
 Of iridescent hues, in sportive play.

IV.

It was a garden fair, by Mermaids planted,—
 Enticing in the sunshine, but at night
 A magic realm indeed,—a scene enchanted!
 A world of rainbow-hues and living light;
 For then the moon-fish rose, and went a-sailing,
 With soft and silvery disc; and round her sprung
 A host of silvery shapes,—of stars unveiling,
 To whirl with lambent light the waves among!

V.

But from the glowing world that there did centre,
 Beneath the lucent waters calm and clear,
 The Poet turned at last, that he might enter
 Still other unknown regions, far and near.
 To those bright Servitors that near him tarried
 He spake a strange desire!—he fain would go
 Beneath the whelming waves,—he would be carried
 Through those mysterious ways that lurked below.

VI.

Then o'er the crested foam they poised their pinions,
 And wafted him a-down, through limpid waves,
 To sunless soundless realms and weird dominions;
 To dim Neptunian halls and Nereids' caves;
 To gold and silvern spoil from precious cargo;
 To pearls that lay unpriced on Neptune's floor;
 To ships that lay unriggered in long embargo,
 The gaunt and spectral ships that sail no more!

VII.

What treasure-trove he saw,—what wealth uncounted!
 'Twould make the very Ind with envy weep!
 Since ever Mortal was, the Sea hath mounted
 To pluck his treasures down and hide them deep.
 On many a sea-god's brow, where waters darkle,
 Do blaze imperial gems of starriest fire;
 On many a Nereid's bosom jewels sparkle
 That Emperors well might crave, and Queens desire!

VIII.

The seaweed rose fantastic where he found him
 Unlit by sun or moon or any star,—
 And shoals of glitt'ring fishes swept around him
 Whose phosphorescent splendours gleamed afar;
 And many a sea-green meadow dimly blooming
 Beneath eternal twilight—there he saw;
 And many a chilly monster o'er him looming
 With dark and dismal shape and greedy maw.

IX.

And then he passed above! . . . A star-eyed maiden
Laid her warm lips on his, with passion pure:
Though he were sick, or well, or poor, or laden
With all the Orient's wealth, *her* love was sure!
On the blue waters of the Adriatic,
'Neath marble palace walls and mellow moon,
He sang sweet songs of Love, that rose ecstatic
O'er dark gondolas on a calm Lagoon.

X.

He gazed on many a fair historic river;
He rambled by the bright romantic Rhine;
And by the drowsy wave of Guadalquiver
He slept 'neath Andalusia's clustering vine.
He caught the sunny Arno's murmuring voices;
He marked the Amazonia's giant stride;
He stood in summer-time, when Life rejoices,
By the blue Neva's most majestic tide.

XI.

He watched the deathless Tiber proudly sweeping
Past many a marble ruin still sublime!
He saw the hoary Nile its courses keeping,
Where Monuments colossal conquer Time.
From Bagdad's splendid towers he passed, to ponder
'Neath flowery tamarisks by the Tigris lone;
He saw the Ganges and the Indus wander
Beneath their mystic clime and burning zone.

XII.

His barque was on the billowy broad Atlantic;
And by the Indian Ocean's balmy tide
He roved 'neath tufted trees that waved gigantic,
And winds from spicy islands o'er him sighed.
He pierced primeval forests, there to linger,
Where strange and brilliant blossoms trailed and clung—
Where Time had never laid a blighting Finger—
Where birds of rainbow-plumage flashed and sung.

XIII.

He stood on summer shores that o'er him lifted
The green and feathery fronds of many a palm;
He sailed on Southern seas, and dreamful drifted
To faery isles of coral, ever calm.
Most magical they rose!—a beauteous wonder,
Amid the wooing wavelets gay and bright,—
An adamantine marvel 'mid the thunder
Of Ocean's angry billows in their might.

XIV.

He rode the floating icebergs, where they glistened
 In the red Northern lights, 'mid regions wild;
 He sought the shores of Greece, and thought he listened
 To long-gone Orators, 'neath skies that smiled.
 For him the gods awoke; the towers of Ilium,
 And Helen's flawless face, were raised anew;
 The ruined Temples rose; the Peristylum
 Upreared its stately beauty to the blue.

XV.

He heard triumphant music, sweet and solemn,
 In dim cathedral aisles with incense fraught;
 For him rose golden dome, and gleaming column,
 And glowing marble mosque with gems enwrought,
 And slender minarets, of grace entrancing,
 Whose bright aerial spires were lifted high
 Against the flush of dawn, the moonbeams glancing,
 Or the deep azure of a noonday sky.

XVI.

Oh, pale and uncrowned Poet! thou dost waken
 From those enchanted realms too sadly soon!
 Now art thou poor indeed, of them forsaken!
 But Hope shall still be thine,—a priceless boon!
 There in thy threadbare coat, and hunger-haunted,
 Amid the London mirk, the London moil,
 Thou hast been striving long—and long undaunted!
 But ne'er did Fortune smile, to cheer thy toil!

XVII.

But still Her smile may come!—and, for thy sadness,
 There may be sweeter cadence in thy Song,
 When echoing plaudits wake to bring thee gladness,
 And Fame doth weave the crown delayed so long!
 But if it be not so,—if Life be hollow,
 Then Deathward float thy dreams, and banish dole!
*For Death may bring thee Life, with scope to follow
 Upon a million worlds that flashing roll—
 The brightest aspirations of thy soul!*

ALICE MACKAY.

HIS TOMB.

It is not often a sane man gives up for sentiment an income of £5000 a-year—when, too, that man is a matter-of-fact builder and architect. But there was a time in my life when I, then as now a builder and architect, had at my command that yearly sum, and when, for sheer sentiment, I gave it up. It happened some years ago.

I had dined at the — Club. Gerald St John, whom I had not seen since we were together at Jesus, Cambridge, was my guest.

What arrant rubbish we talk and preach about our great men. We deify them, and rage if the truth, that they are much like their fellows, be told. The inner life of a Carlyle is published, and all critics howl that time has not been left to its usual effect of blotting out all of human and leaving untouched only the Godlike. Cromwell descends to us unique in that he bequeathed to posterity his moles and pimples. Painters lie deliberately in portrayal of the human face; even lifelike-nesses of the sun are betrayed by the brush. It is not the event makes the man,—the event but gives the one, fortunate over his fellows, his chance. How many of capacity die mute, inglorious? how many, longing for their country's or other countries' blood, die guiltless from failure of circumstance?

Before my prosaic struggle for existence began, I had known St John well. He was a man, I believe, of no birth, but born with courtly manner and bearing, and possessed of that salve for grandfatherlessness, indifference to rank and the opinion of others. His first year at the University was reckless, mad. Then, how I know

not, came a change. And when he dined with me, as I have said, he was a Roman Catholic priest, already known, though but ordained few years, for his eloquence and asceticism. That he was ambitious I knew. But I could not fathom his ambition. Place, the respect of others, seemed outside him; he lived in a world of his own. He had undoubted power, if chance were favourable, to hold any, the highest, position. But still nothing in him suggested prophecy of greatness.

After dinner we sat in the strangers' room—he, for once, smoking. And, to tell the truth, he bored me for a good hour. He carried on, with no interruption from me, a monologue on self-sacrifice which I barely followed. Soon after eleven he went away.

He had gone but a few minutes when the waiter brought me in a card—"Mr John Strudwick."

"The gentleman, if you please, sir, says he must see you."

The time was strange, the name unknown to me.

A huge man, many inches over six feet, came in—a man of finely marked features, but with a generally coarse appearance. His eyes had that dead, inhuman look seen in some Jews and many stockbrokers.

"This isn't a right time to come," said he, putting out his hand, "but I wanted to see you alone, quite alone."

He sat down. I gave him a cigar, which he took and lighted.

"You're not a Roman Catholic?" said he.

I told him I was not.

"That was a friend of yours who just went out?"

I answered, curtly, "Yes."

"The fact is, would you like five thousand pounds a-year? Five thousand pounds a-year made safe for your life?"

I stared at the man in astonishment. He spoke calmly and deliberately, with no emotion, and as though all he said had been rehearsed before.

"I don't understand," said I.

"It's simple enough," he replied; "there ain't nothing wrong—nothing wrong."

I made no reply, waiting for some explanation.

"I'll take another cigar," said he, after some minutes' silence. He lighted his second cigar and puffed at it hard for a time.

And then he broke out into a furious tirade against humanity. His anger was terrible, and he spoke with rude if illiterate force. No doubt he had suffered greatly. He had started in the world as an honest man. His best friend betrayed him. He had married for love. His wife deceived him. When poor, said he, the whole world had kicked; now, when rich, all fawned slyly on him.

"And I've made money," said he. "How? In my own way. It's mine; no one can touch it."

"But," I ventured to say, "what has all this to do with me?"

He looked at me vaguely for a minute, and then went on, as not having heard the question—

"I'm worth more than a million. What use is it to me? I ain't educated, don't care for science; pictures don't touch me, and I ain't sure of 'God save the Queen.' Not a human being shall have a farthing,—not a farthing."

He got up suddenly and came and stood in front of me.

"I want you to build me a mausoleum," said he. He mouthed the word "Mausoleum" as though its sound were good to him.

"A mausoleum?"

"Yes, a mausoleum. For me; for myself alone. Where I can rest when I'm dead. And I guess," said he, with an unpleasant smile, "there ain't nothing on earth to call me back: I'll lie there peacefully, right through eternity."

When a man speaks to an absolute stranger with warmth and familiar openness, there is suspicion that his feeling in regard to the subject in hand is but shallow. And this suspicion I entertained at first as to Strudwick's feeling towards humanity. But I was soon convinced of the sincerity of his hate. He was imbued with a fixed enmity to his fellow-men, and in some curious half-mad way connected the satisfaction of this enmity with the completion of the mausoleum. The building of this was with him a monomania.

The day after I had first seen him he arranged to pay me £5000 a-year while designing and superintending the building of the mausoleum.

"But that ain't the end of it," said he. "I shall want my mausoleum looked after when I'm in it, and you're the man. We'll fix terms when the building's complete—except as to me," he added, with a grin.

On the evening of that day we went down together to look at the spot he had chosen for its erection. And the place was certainly well adapted for his purpose.

We trained down to Penzance, and in the morning drove out to near the Land's End. We left the carriage on the road at a spot marked by Strudwick, and walked to the near edge of the precipitous cliff. In front of us, some twenty yards out at sea, stood a seemingly isolated rock.

"That's the place," said Strudwick, pointing to the rock. It rose sharp and high from the water; there was not a blade of grass on it; it stood forlornly alone.

"Follow me," said Strudwick.

Luckily I have a good head; but the path we took down to the sea tried me.

"Now, how do you think we get there?" said he, with a self-satisfied grin, as we stood by the water's edge, looking at the rough sea between us and the rock. I could not tell; the place seemed unapproachable. But, coasting along a little way, we came to a narrow opening going straight inland and sharply downwards. This we took. It was soon dark, but Strudwick had a little lamp which he lighted. Our path led curving to the left, and then again went straight on, always downwards. Then the way rose a little, there was a glimmer of outer daylight, and we stood on a narrow platform at the foot of the isolated rock.

"Now the first thing to be done," said he, evidently with intense enjoyment, "is to have steps cut up to the top. Then we'll explore what there is up there, and then you must make your plans according. But don't you hurry. There's lots of time. I won't die yet; I mean to live till it's ready for me—finished outright. And now, Mr Smith," said he, looking at me with his face suffused with satisfaction, "ain't this a supreme place for a man's mausoleum? Ain't it just fit to rest in, outside eternity?"

The rock was granite, and it took twelve months before a way up was cut and the top blasted and chiselled level. The cost was great. But that affected my client in no way. He refused to fix any limit of price; he simply said he knew what he wanted, and must

have it at any expense. This preliminary work required little supervision from me, and I utilised the time in determining the plan of the mausoleum. I say "determining," for I drew six different plans before I at last hit on one which pleased Strudwick.

We found some difficulty in getting workmen; and when, after more than three years, the tomb approached completion, all in the neighbourhood refused to go near. So we had to import men from London. This, of course, delighted Strudwick. I think the idea of a man's tomb being built there touched superstitious feeling. And the mausoleum itself had a rather ghastly look about it. I found there was nearly an acre and a half of ground on the top of the rock to deal with. Covering all this stood the mausoleum, giving, from the outside view, scarcely the idea of any human building, but simply that of the rock itself having been cut into septagon shape, with its top rounded, dome-like.

Black marble was the only stone used, except for the first two courses, which were of white marble. The dome, though looking solid as the living rock, was cut as thin as possible, and with numerous very small deep indentations from inside, leaving but a skin of stone. Thus the light from inside—the character of which I hereafter describe—shone through the dome at night dimly, so that a luminous mass seemed then to brood over the rock. This light, though dim, was perceived by birds, for from sundown till sunrise flocks flew round and round, crying shrilly.

Inside was one great chamber, —all of black marble,—140 feet wide by 160 in length. In the centre was a huge solid block for Strudwick himself when dead.

The height I made as great as possible; but the roof was elaborately carved, with many drooping points. From the central space ran many pillars, tapering up to, but not reaching, the roof, and so increasing the idea of vast height. All the floor, walls, and pillars were closely engraved with what at first sight appeared meaningless, continuous lines.

This interior, day and night, was lighted by electricity, driven by the never-still sea below. And the manner of lighting was peculiar. The black walls and pillars in many places and all the drooping points of the roof were hollowed, the hollows concealed by the thinnest possible films of marble, so that when any light was thrown on the walls or pillars the marble appeared solid. But no light was so introduced. In the hollows were electric lamps, and it was thus the place was lighted, day and night, by a fairly strong luminous glow, which seemed to emanate from the material marble itself. And under this light the meaningless marks came into life. Stand where you might, you saw hideous faces staring at you from a distance; fix one and approach, it vanished, others starting into appearance in its place, as taking life from its death.

The idea of this was Strudwick's,—he took it from the well-known skull on Holbein's picture,—and it delighted him.

"Only let me just die," said he, "and lie here, and no one 'll come near. No one 'll want to come near. The d—d fools will say it's haunted. You've done your work admirably—admirably. I'm very much pleased. Why, if any one trespassed, these faces 'd just send him into a fit. They come and go from nowhere. But I'll see I don't have any trespassers round me."

There were of course no windows to the tomb; the only entrance was cut into it from the living rock at some distance below. In a cranny of the rock was a small steel plate with a lock in its centre. The key being turned, the plate could be removed, and, by a lever thus disclosed, a great piece of what appeared live rock could be pivoted round till the entering passage was clear. But, when the plate was in position, it was so hidden that no entrance of any kind seemed possible, and there was nothing to show there was a tomb or chamber of any kind on the rock. Even at night the glow through the dome from within appeared so diffused that it suggested luminousness of the stone itself rather than any internal source of light.

The whole construction was completed at last, and Strudwick and I took a final survey, he locking and carrying away the key,—there was but one.

"Now this must be looked after, regular, each month," said he; "I'll look after it as long as I'm alive, and then you. But you keep on the £5000. What I propose is this,"—he had evidently settled the whole thing definitely in his mind long before speaking—"You bury me. I don't know how, exactly, yet; that bothers me. But, anyhow, I won't have no ceremony and no weeping friends or relations,—or dry-eyed ones either, for the matter of that, and they'll all be dry-eyed enough for me when they read my will. But you must sign an agreement, binding you every month to come and stay by me for one hour. I know you're straight enough; but I like these things on paper,—I shall die more comfortable so."

I, of course, signed the paper. However mad in fact, Strudwick

was sane enough in law, and £5000 a year is £5000 a-year.

"I'd like," said Strudwick, reflectively, "to arrange as you should bury me by yourself. Or, if any fellows helped you, to arrange to have 'em pitched into the sea afterwards, so as no one would know how to get in except you. But I suppose that couldn't be managed? 'Twould be too dangerous for you?"

I agreed with him the danger would be too great, and he did not press the point.

For twelve months I received quarterly my yearly £5000, never seeing, never hearing of, my client. But at the end of that time he suddenly appeared at my chambers in a high state of excitement.

"I've arranged the whole thing," said he. "Have you heard of this American fellow who preserves bodies—turns 'em to stone?"

"No," said I.

"Well," he went on, "I read first about it in one of them Society papers. A baby died out there, and they wanted to bury it with its mother, a thousand miles off. And this fellow just turned it into stone. Didn't take out anything, just fixed it, immortal-like, as it was, with its heart and liver and all that standing. And," he rose up here and looked at me triumphantly, "I've got that fellow over at my house, and we're going down to the mausoleum. I want you to come too."

"You don't mean——" said I, horrified.

"No, no," he broke in, with a grin of enjoyment, "I ain't going before my time. But I want him to see the place, and for us to arrange my attitude. This fellow's something of an artist, you know. And, as I am going to rest right into eternity, I may as well do it respectably, eh?"

The American, a tall pale man, joined us at the railway-station, and we went down together to Penzance.

"About the most forlorn-looking edifice I've seen," said the American, when we reached the mausoleum.

When we got inside, Strudwick laid himself down on the central block in the attitude he thought would be most suitable. He took off his boots before stepping on, lest he might scratch the polished surface. The act was ludicrous, perhaps, but showed how completely he was wrapped up in his strange idea. The American had clearly an artistic mind, for he stayed there a good hour, arranging and rearranging Strudwick's position, moving his arms and legs, as though already dealing with a limp dead body. And in explanation of the posture he at last chose, he explained to us that after life had passed there would be probably some slight relaxation of the muscles.

"Well," said Strudwick, when we were again outside, "I enjoyed that. It seems like business. Mind," and he turned to the American, "you're on the spot instanter when wanted? No delay?"

It appeared that he had agreed to pay this American some yearly sum to keep him in England.

Two years passed. The £5000 was regularly paid. I neither saw nor heard anything of Strudwick.

In January I received a lawyer's letter, and enclosed with it a small golden key. It was the key of the mausoleum. Before reading the letter I knew Strudwick was dead. What had caused his death I never knew—in fact never asked.

Following my instructions, I went at once to the residence of

the American. Strudwick had been dead barely twenty-four hours, but the process of hardening was concluded.

"A great success," said the American, smiling with satisfaction, as he tapped with his knuckles the resounding chest of his subject. "No apparent relaxation of the muscles, you see—even the blood fixed in the cheeks, so that a hue of life remains. Really, I have never done better work."

There was a mark over the heart as of a stab from a knife. I asked what it was.

"That's nothing," said the American. "Of course before commencing operations I have a doctor's certificate, but they make mistakes sometimes. So I always pierce the heart through, that there may be no mistake. I tell them beforehand when they prearrange for their own preservation. Mr Strudwick liked the idea seemingly."

Certainly the body as it lay was most lifelike. The only difference I noticed was in the expression. But even that was not of death. The greatest scoundrel, the laziest hound, in death puts on a look of peace. But Strudwick's face showed no peace. The eyes—of glass, lifelike imitations of his own—shone out placidly enough, but there was a peculiar suggestion in all the features of surprise, somewhat ghastly surprise. I pointed this out.

"Yes," said the American, "I see it too. It is exceptional, and somewhat painful to see. But lifelike, most lifelike. I suppose he was mad?"

"Morally, not legally," said I.

"Of course not legally," he said, with a smile.

We were obliged to have assistance in carrying the body up to

the point where the steel plate was. But from there to its ultimate place of deposit, the American and I alone took it. We were both strong men; but the burden was a heavy one, though the outer box was of very light construction.

There was little difficulty in placing the body on the central block of marble. It was as hard and firm as if made of stone, and we simply deposited it symmetrically on its black bed.

"Yes; he must have been mad," said the American, as, after we had finished our talk, he looked round the place and saw the coming and going hideous figures.

We left the tomb and walked along the passage leading to the exit. Suddenly the American turned to me and said—

"What was that?"

I had heard nothing.

We were just about to step out into the open light when I myself heard an unmistakable sound, coming apparently from the tomb.

"What was it?" said I to the American in my turn, seeing he too had heard it.

"Nothing," said he; "it can be nothing. There is no other entrance but this?" I told him there was no other, and, not sorry to be again in the light of the sun, we both walked out, and I started the lever, replaced and locked the plate, and saw the rock slowly swing back into position.

The next month passed quickly,—I found the payment to me of my £5000 had been legally arranged for,—and the time came for me to visit the tomb. I looked on this visit as a mere matter of very simple business, and most certainly journeyed down to Penzance without any misgivings.

I found no difficulty in unlocking and removing the plate and effecting entrance. All seemed as

I had left it : the light burned steadily, and with its usual brightness.

I wandered about for some little time, and, glancing at my watch, found I had been there half an hour. An hour was the full time I had to remain. The intense silence became oppressive.

I turned at last to Strudwick himself, and stood still, looking at him. As I did so I saw—from the heat of my body, I suppose, in the cold of the place—that his face was sweating copiously. I took out my handkerchief to wipe off the moisture. But scarcely had it touched him when I heard, distinctly uttered, as from Strudwick himself, but far away, the words—

“For the sake of God——”

The voice still spoke, but I heard no more than those few first words ; for they threw me into such a tremor of mental excitement that I could follow naught else. My first impulse was to fly ; but self-shame and vanity, remembrance, vague but active, that for the £5000 I must remain the full hour, stayed me.

For the remaining half-hour I stayed there, but under great mental stress, with constantly growing fear. For always the voice continued, monotonous, uninflected, but suggesting earnest entreaty.

I think there must have been a constant repetition of one phrase, for again and again the words I had heard before fear disturbed my mind, “For the sake of God !” came to me. But all the rest, in my terror, was lost.

At last the full hour passed, and I ran back to the sunlight and closed the passage. I was trembling violently : I had to sit down for some time before I could walk steadily.

The voice, even under the sunlight, seemed to pursue me, and rang in my ears, not only with the words I had distinguished, but with those unmeaning to me.

I slept little, and when I slept dreamt over and over again of what had happened, the voice always ringing in my ears, and I got back to London feeling weak and ill.

Strudwick was dead, undoubtedly dead. His dead body I had seen ; it had been where it lay thirty days. The heart was pierced through and through, the veins filled no longer with blood but a penetrating chemical fluid. Whence came the voice ?

I passed through a strange change of mental feeling during the next month. At first pure fear or the shadow of fear troubled me. But this, I think, grew less oppressive with time, before a new feeling, gradually increasing in strength, of curiosity to know what in fact had been the fully spoken words. And, too, I felt some wish to satisfy myself whence the voice came. But this wish I am inclined to think was in great part artificial. It came from argument that the voice could not, in common-sense, be that of Strudwick, while at the bottom of my heart I knew there was conviction, however preposterous, that it *was* his. But the strongest feeling was as to the exact words spoken.

When the time, then, came for my next visit, I went down with very mixed feelings. There was undoubted fear ; but, struggling with, opposed to this, was absorbing curiosity,—so that the fear appeared in some measure counter-balanced. And that this was so, was shown by what happened.

Again, when in the tomb, some half-hour passed in perfect silence. The body of Strudwick lay there,

still bearing its strange resemblance to life.

Barely had the half-hour passed when, but this time without my touching the body, I again heard the voice. And now all the words came to me clearly—

"For the love of God, of all you hold dear, of your soul, help me! I am bound in misery to this spot. My soul cannot free itself. I am alone. For the love of God, of all you hold dear, of your soul!"

And so, never ceasing, over and over again, ran the words, now as born of supreme sadness rather than entreaty, monotonously level in tone. And the voice was that of Strudwick, far off, but softened and curiously younger in tone.

I left the tomb, slowly this time, and not till I was free from it knew I had suffered from great terror. I was unnerved when I reached the open air, and trembling, as I had before trembled.

I lay ill on my bed for a week, on my return. And all that time the voice never left me. When convalescent, I found the absolute want of interest I had had in Strudwick as a living man had given place to deep interest in him not living. I say "not living," but must explain I was convinced thoroughly, against common-sense, against my own philosophy, that he still suffered some form of existence, some new life in what to us is death. But to me the coarseness and brutality of the man seemed blotted out,—the youthfulness of the voice as I had heard it may have had some part in this,—and I could only think of a living creature in misery, crying to me across a great gulf for help. I longed, earnestly longed, to give help. But what help? I was powerless myself. To whom could I appeal?

Three years had passed since I

had last seen Gerald St John. But I had, during this time, often heard of him. His reputation had grown swiftly, and he was named for some great preferment in the Roman Catholic Church.

I was brooding sadly over my difficulty when the man himself came in. I should always have been glad to see him; I was proud of his friendship, and felt his long absence. But now I was doubly glad. If any man could help me, he could.

"Why have you come now, after three years?" said I.

"I don't know; the spirit moved me," said he, lightly.

"But I want you, wanted you," I said, eagerly.

"Not——?" He paused.

I thought he referred to a desire he had years before expressed that I should follow him and join the Catholic Church.

"Not that," I said, "but——"

And I told him the whole story of Strudwick from the beginning.

He listened intently to all I said: my words raised some strange excitement in him.

"I spoke lightly," said he, when I had finished, "in saying the spirit moved me to come now. It *was* the spirit."

His eyes were bright: I saw deep feeling moved him.

"Do you know why I came?" he went on. "I wanted to speak to you again, as I have so often in the past. I have been offered,"—it matters not what now, it was high preferment,—"*and I cannot accept it. I must leave the Church.*"

I could only look at him in astonishment.

He was silent for some time, walking quickly up and down the room. Then again he spoke—

"I *must* tell you, I *must* speak. My life has been a living lie, a lie

to myself. Only now have I known what I am. I have no faith, no belief; I have deceived myself by good works, by self-denial. In my misery I have prayed for guidance, for a sign. None has been granted me. It is my very unbelief itself which has given birth to such a prayer."

He threw his hands up with a despairing gesture.

"Think of my sin! I, a priest of God, leading others; I, ignorant of, having no part in God, assuming the dress of His servant! I——"

He paced the room, at first quickly, but after a time deliberately, and his face grew calm again. He came close to me and put his hand on my shoulder, and said with a smile—

"But you have given me hope, a ray of hope. I must go with you and see this—this fellow-creature. Perhaps I have been sent to you, perhaps I may be granted power to help and purge my sin."

I felt no surprise that he accepted without question what I said as true. I knew him well, and knew he viewed all such matters from a standpoint different entirely to my own.

He rejected my entreaties to stay, saying he must be alone. He was worn and thin. I knew how ingrained was the honesty of the man, and knew I had seen no theatrical display of feeling, but an outburst of spiritual wretchedness felt only by the few great natures of this world,—feeling beyond, incomprehensible to, us mortals of common clay. I must touch very lightly on the part that Gerald St John took in what I write of. Only that which is absolutely necessary for the narrative shall I put on paper.

When I next visited the tomb

Gerald St John went with me. In the presence of his stronger nature I felt relieved from all responsibility. I had little or no fear; only curiosity, vulgar curiosity, remained. He looked more worn and ill even than when I had last seen him, barely three weeks before. But there was another change which struck me greatly.

I have spoken of his ingrained indifference to the opinion of his fellow-men. And this, shining in his eyes, had always given him an aspect of want of sympathy with, of remoteness from, other human beings. But now there was a new light in his eyes, a light I had never seen before. He seemed to look out on the world with more human interest, to be in closer sympathy with his surroundings. I told him of this.

"You see it too?" said he, brightening, as glad of what I had said,—*"I myself feel it. I have new life, new hope. I think there is a change in me."*

But he was terribly worn and ill, his face almost fleshless. He looked as if he had passed through a long time of vigil and fast.

It was the time of the equinox, and, as we passed along the coast, we saw that the sea was very rough; the wind was blowing in a great gale. There was no rain, but the sky was full of angry, quick-scudding clouds, and it was very cold.

We reached the rock about two o'clock. The descent to the underground passage was dangerous, for a very storm of wind was blowing, and the sea-spray beating high made all foothold slippery. But we got down safely, and soon were in the tomb.

Let me confess that when we entered only strong human curiosity moved me. That Gerald St John had some definite purpose in

view I did not doubt. But to my prosaic mind,—sure even as I was, in spite of myself, that the dead Strudwick had spoken to me,—his purpose could end in nothing definite. I am afraid the hope, the relief, I felt in his presence was simply from the burden being taken from me and cast on his stronger shoulders.

When we entered, Gerald St John walked straight to where the lifelike body of Strudwick lay, and fell down there on his knees in an attitude of prayer.

He neither moved nor spoke. The time to me passed very slowly, the place seemed even more solitary than before, with now the silent, motionless, kneeling figure present.

By my watch half an hour passed. And then again I heard the voice. But with no fear. With curiosity, no fear—

"For the love of God, of all you hold dear, of your soul, help me! I am bound in misery to this spot. My soul cannot free itself. I am alone. For the love of God, of all you hold dear, of your soul!"

It was undoubtedly the voice of Strudwick; but, as before, curiously younger, its hardness gone. And through its far-off monotony I still felt it came from misery and entreaty.

But now, when the voice had once spoken, it was silent. Before, it had repeated the same words over and over again. Gerald St John had heard it, as I knew by a slight start he gave. But for that, he remained silent and motionless.

The hour was nearly gone when again the voice spoke. The same words in the same tone, and Gerald St John still knelt, silent and motionless. A third time I heard the voice. The hour was passed.

"It is time to go," said I, touching Gerald on the shoulder.

"You must leave me," said he, turning his head, but not rising; "come back to-morrow at this time."

"It is impossible," said I; "you are weak and ill—you cannot bear a fast of twenty-four hours."

He looked at me sternly. "Leave me," said he. I felt I must obey, and walked away. The door I left unclosed. Gerald could not know whether or not I had closed it; no one, I felt sure, would venture there, and I dared not leave him imprisoned for so long a time.

I have forgotten to state that when I spoke in the tomb I heard my voice echo throughout the place. There was no echo to Strudwick's voice.

Some 200 yards from the edge of the cliff was a little hut where an old fisherman used to live. It was empty now, and had been since the building of the mausoleum. Here I determined to stay till Gerald St John rejoined me. I sent our carriage back for a pillow, some rugs, and food, and then paced up and down the edge of the cliff, looking at the rock. When the man came back with the things I had sent for, I arranged a bed on the floor, and ate, I am afraid with enjoyment, a cold dinner.

Night had now fallen, and the dome loomed out at sea in the darkness,—a strange luminous light, hanging in the air. The wind still blew violently, and the sea raged high; now and again a sea-bird screamed as, one of many, it wheeled round the dome, its shrill cry audible above the deeper sounds of the sea and wind.

I slept well, and rose with the sun. And without thought,—I had not undressed,—turned to descend to the tomb. But half-way I stopped, and, with thought, turned back. There could be no mortal peril to Gerald, he was used to long

fasts and vigils. And I knew his words, "Come back to-morrow at this time," inferred that till then he expected to be undisturbed. I again began pacing backwards and forwards on the cliff's edge.

The time passed wearily, though I slept for a couple of hours in the middle of the day. The force of the storm was broken at sunrise, and throughout the day the sea gradually fell and the sky cleared, till at two, when I directed my steps to the tomb, the sky was clear but for a few white fleecy clouds, and the sea was moved but by gentle ripples.

What I expected to find on my return to the tomb I know not. What I did find was this:—

On the black central block of marble lay no longer the lifelike mummy of Strudwick, but a formless mass. And by the side of this, as I had left him, but that one arm now was stretched out before him over what had been Strudwick, was Gerald St John. I touched him gently. He did not move. I shook him by the shoulder. He gave no response. He felt cold to my touch. In sudden fear I raised him in my arms. He was in a dead faint or—

I carried him quickly outside, through the underground passage, and up the cliff. He was very, very light. Luckily I had ordered the carriage to return at two, and it was there. We galloped into Penzance and drove to the nearest doctor. He gave but one look at the calm pallid face, and almost as a matter of detail placed his hand on the heart.

"He is dead," said he.

There was an inquest, of course. But when I explained that Strudwick had been buried with no Christian rites, no rites indeed of any kind, and it was known

Gerald was a Roman Catholic priest, his presence was held as fully accounted for, and I was not called on for immaterial details. The doctor, too, gave evidence that the body was wasted by previous fasting, so that in life there was but low vitality to withstand the night's fasting vigil.

"A terrible waste of a useful life," said the coroner to me, after the inquest.

"I am not sure of that," said I. Perhaps the reader, if he believe what is written, may agree with me.

After reflection I found it impossible to continue receiving the £5000. The feeling was no doubt sentimental, but it was too strong to be resisted. My surrender made an intestacy as to the sum capitalised to secure the amount yearly payable to me, and this went to a brother of Strudwick.

I had some natural regret at the loss of this money, but there was comfort. For Gerald had left me his sole heir, and I inherited some £4000. His will showed strangely that he anticipated not only his own death, but my refusal to continue to accept Strudwick's money.

I received a letter from Strudwick's brother about a month afterwards. "Your noble disinterested conduct," wrote he, "has made me your devoted friend for life. To you I owe thanks for the portentous sum of £200,000 in consols. Accept freely from me the enclosed cheque."

The cheque was crossed, made payable to order, and was for the sum of £100.

After long reflection, I have come to the conclusion that Strudwick judged his fellow-men from his relations—especially his surviving brother. And I really think there was some reason for the opinion he formed.

SCHOOLBOYS AS THEY WERE.

A DAY'S BIRDS'-NESTING.

"I SHOULD like to know what good those Sunday-schools have done, now," said Mr Tomlinson, the rich miller. "Why, the boys used to go a birds'-nesting of a Sunday morning; and a capital thing too—ask any farmer; and very pretty it was to see the strings o' heggs hanging up in poor people's houses. You'll not see 'em nowhere now."¹

What would have been Mr Tomlinson's feelings had he lived into these enlightened days, when to take a bird's nest is a crime, and boys go to school the whole week? "Strings o' eggs," however, might still have been seen in plenty forty years ago in the cottages in my father's parish, and in our own house as well, the walls of which it was my delight to decorate with these appendages when I was at home in the spring and early summer. From the end of March till the beginning of June is, or I should rather say was, the great season for the bird-nesters; and the month of April never comes round to me now in this dreary London without recalling to my mind some of the happiest days of my life—

"The happy hills, the pleasing shade,
The fields beloved in vain,"

which surrounded my home from boyhood to middle age, and which I shall probably never see again.

The Easter holidays always embraced some part of April, and in those days birds'-nesting came as naturally to a schoolboy as

cricket or marbles: and as it was generally believed that by keeping down some species of small birds the farmer and gardener were benefited, and as no fear of their extinction ever crossed anybody's mind, he was left to do much as he pleased, and nobody asked him whether he took one egg out of a nest or all.

Every generation, I suppose, thinks that "boys are not what they were." "I like boys to be boys," was a very common saying in my own childhood among my elders and betters. They would add that they disliked to see boys "such little men," implying that when they themselves were in jackets no such offensive precocity was ever perceptible. But I think there is a difference between the schoolboy of to-day and the schoolboy of half a century ago. I think the schoolboy born when classic Canning died was satisfied with simpler pleasures than the boys of the *fin de siècle*, and that his education and general training left his boyish freshness untouched longer than it does now. His early spring-time lasted longer. But there is also a difference in the elders. They do not complain of this. They accept it without protest as the natural effect of causes over which they had no control; and perhaps are right in thinking that the change in question is not confined to the rising generation, but affects men and women of all ages alike.

Be these things as they may, I

¹ Scenes of Clerical Life: Janet's Repentance. Scene—The bar of the Red Lion at Milby.

doubt whether any boy coming home for the Easter holidays to-day will feel the same delight with which I used to rush out directly after breakfast the next morning to search the shrubberies, orchards, and adjoining hedges for the first nests of the year. The nests in the immediate neighbourhood of the house I used to spare, though greatly interested in finding them: for my father had a good deal of the Waterton in his composition, and liked his garden to be a kind of paradise for birds.

My guide, philosopher, and friend in everything connected with bird-life, as many years afterwards in partridge-shooting, was a fine, tall, handsome man, about forty, who had been a keeper's assistant in Epping Forest, then a poacher, then a brewer's drayman in London, and had now settled down with us in the midland counties, and looked after the small glebe which my father for some years farmed himself. He knew every bird to be found in the country, their haunts, their eggs, and their notes, with the provincial names for each of them, whether in the midland or the eastern counties. My first business in the morning was to seek out Bill, who was sure to have some news for me. He would know of a blackbird's nest in the ivy which grew thickly over one end of the parsonage. A thrush would be sitting, as he thought, in one of the fir-trees at the corner of the lawn, or perhaps in one of the laurels. A misseltoe thrush—"woodland steercock" he always called it—was building high up in an elm-tree, but whether the nest was finished or not he was not sure. A tomtit's nest was in a hole in the thatch of the pig-stye: he had seen the old bird go in and out; but it was early for "them blue Jemmies," and he didn't

think she had begun to lay. Having gone the round of these discoveries, I would then begin regular birds'-nesting by myself in the hedgerows and ditches. There was one particular fence where I was always sure of a prize,—one that had been kept well cut, so that it was thick at the bottom, with a good many clefts in the lower branches, such as the dingy little bird who is named after the hedgerow usually selects. Poking my stick into a bushy-looking place, I see a little dark-brown object creeping stealthily away; another turn of the hook, and there my treasure stands revealed, the beautiful little nest of the hedge-sparrow, with its eggs of deep unspotted blue. They show very prettily against the green of the moss with which the nest is fringed, and the red and white horse-hair or cow-hair with which it is lined. Taking the nest and the eggs together, it is one of the prettiest we have. It is placed about a foot from the ground in the situation I have already described, and hidden by the intertwining sprigs of thorn which surround it. The hedge-sparrow never builds on a spray like the warblers and the brown linnet, but always in some branch which will hold the nest firm—"a vision of delight," as Wordsworth calls it. As there are but three eggs in it, it is clear that they are not sat upon, so they are at once confiscated, and blown with the help of a stiff sharp-pointed thorn, and will form the foundation of my string. A further search amongst the hedgerows just at this time yields only the same results. Both the thrush and the blackbird are very fond of building in the thick whitethorn or blackthorn hedges with which the midland counties abound; and the nest, if placed right in the middle, is not to be

reached without considerable laceration of the wrists and the backs of the hands. I have found the nests of both of these birds on a ditch-bank before now, and also in osier-beds, just in the stub from which the plant springs; but very seldom. I never found a nest in a tree—I mean in an elm, an ash, or an oak, or any tree of equal dignity; though one of the park-keepers in St James's Park surprised me very much last year by showing me a blackbird's nest high up on an elm branch overhanging the gravel walk.

When Easter falls at the end of April our trophies will be much more varied; and by the Whitsuntide holidays all our midland birds will have nests. Some morning on coming down to breakfast we shall see that our old friends the fly-catchers, who visit us every year, have returned to their summer residence: there they are, the pair of them, flitting backwards and forwards at intervals between the iron railings which border a sunk fence and a tree standing close by the house. We know that there will soon be a nest,—either in the old pear-tree trained against one of the gable-ends, or in the ivy at the back, or else perhaps in the acacia opposite the dining-room window, on which the birds are so frequently perching. It is here that we eventually discover it, in a fork of the tree about eight feet from the ground. The birds are perfectly fearless, and we may go close up and look at the hen-bird while she is sitting without any fear of making her forsake. Birds differ very much in this respect. I always found the blackbird the most suspicious of all. If one of the eggs, in colour like a very ripe stilton cheese, is removed from the nest, or if even looked at very

often, the blackbird usually takes alarm, and departs never to return. I always coveted the fly-catchers' eggs, because they were of rather an uncommon colour,—a white ground, sometimes with a suspicion of blue or green in it, and profusely blotched with reddish brown, so that sometimes no white could be seen: but I never took more than one, and that only because I was very unlikely to find another nest farther off.

It is now time that we went into the orchard and looked about for what is the prettiest nest of all—though, nest and eggs together, I think the hedge-sparrow's equals it. But the one we are now in search of is peculiarly difficult to find, because the bird has the art of making the outside of its nest exactly like the bark of the tree in which it is built. We examine several hoary old apple-trees without success; it is useless to look in any others. There is a bushy, crumpled, old elder-tree in one corner of the orchard, which would seem to be of the right colour, but I never found a nest in it. We are nearly going away in despair, when, as we pass a straggling, crooked tree, with only two main branches, we suddenly catch a bird's eye. Then we know we have found. She is looking at us from a little cup-shaped nest, so beautifully finished and so completely coated with lichens that we might have passed it twenty times without seeing it. It is fitted so exactly into a little hollow made by the parting of two smaller branches, that it looks only a knot or excrescence of the tree itself: this is the nest of the chaffinch, the most perfect little artist in its way of all the bird tribe. The old one flies off as we approach, and dipping one hand into the nest

we feel four or five smooth, warm, round things at the bottom, and take one out to have a look at it. The ground colour is a cloudy white, marked with streaks of very dark purple, nearly black, and growing lighter at the edges, like copper. But as there is reason to suppose the old bird is sitting, we put it back again, and look for another unsuccessfully. In the old red brick wall, however, which bounds the orchard on one side, in a hole near the bottom, hidden by rank weeds, we find a robin's nest, with six or seven eggs in it, the colour being an intermixture of dark and light red shading into each other. Bill joins us at the moment to tell us that he has spied out a golden wren's nest at the top of a tall fir-tree in the garden, which, however, is not to be touched; and that in a thick box-tree in a secluded corner he has found a "jug's" nest, the jug being his name for the long-tailed tit, but from what derived I never found out, unless it is the shape of the nest, which is a most remarkable structure, oblong, deep, and having a hole near the middle, or perhaps rather nearer the top, for the bird to go in at. Like most of the tits, it lays a good many eggs, from half-a-dozen to a dozen, nearly pure white, but having a few faintly marked spots or streaks at one end.

But we must now hurry farther afield. Let the time be the last quarter of May or the first few days of June. The hedges are in full leaf, the honeysuckle and dog-roses are beginning to garland them. The grass is growing long and thick in the meadows. The brook sides are fragrant with meadow-sweet; and the hedge- and ditch-banks are well clothed with coarse herbage and weeds. If we start

downwards towards the meadows, and take the ditch-side of a pretty thick hedgerow that has not been lately trimmed, we shall find the nests of some of the warblers perched on the projecting sprays, —shallow, saucer-shaped little fabrics, composed only of dried grass, with a very thin lining of horsehair. A cursory inspection of the branches which spread across the ditch is all that is sufficient. There! — what's that little bird just darting down the ditch? Our little friend "Peggy" to be sure, as all the country people call the whitethroat; and here is her nest fixed upon a slender bough, which sways about with every wind, and contains four delicate-looking eggs, white, with a few little brown dots half the size of a pin's head here and there. I used to find a great many of these nests; and there was another of the warbler tribe, which Bill used to call the hay tit, whose nest and eggs, hardly distinguishable from the whitethroat's, were always to be met with along the hedge-sides. I have sometimes thought since that they were the same bird.

But now we have got into the meadows, and have come to a hedgerow of a different description—a very tall whitethorn fence, thicker at the top than at the bottom, with the delicate pink and white of the lovely wild-rose peeping through the topmost twigs. On the other side runs a tiny brooklet to join the main stream farther on, and the sides of it are so completely overgrown with luxuriant herbage that the water itself is scarcely visible. Here, then, we may expect good sport. Hedges of this description I know to be a favourite resort of the green linnet, and I shall be surprised if we do not start something else nearer to the water's

edge. There ought to be two boys together for this job, one on each side,—one to peer carefully into the tangled hedge-top, another to walk on the bank, gently moving the grass as he goes along. The linnet's nest, if you are careful, cannot well be missed. The green linnet or greenfinch builds rather a large nest in proportion to its size—sometimes nearly as big as a blackbird's—and is very fond of placing it high up in a hedge where it cannot very easily be got at either by man or beast. Here it is—look! I thought so: the old bird has just gone off. Right up in that thick bit, almost hidden by the honeysuckle, is a dark round object which we know at once to be what we are in search of. The outside of the nest is formed of roots, dry twigs, and moss; and the inside with wool, horse-hair, and feathers—as snug a little bed as you could wish to see. The eggs are larger and more strongly marked than those of the white-throat, or of the brown linnet, of which more anon. They taper more delicately towards the narrow end; and the purer white is more largely sprinkled with freckles of a richer brown. As, in spite of bleeding hands and face, I regard my “speckled beauties,” as it is customary to call trout, with the greatest satisfaction, I hear an exclamation of surprise and delight from my companion on the ditch-side. He has found the nest of the reed-sparrow, who always builds upon the ground—a sparrow-like looking bird with a black head, who builds among long grass and rushes by the side of brooks and dykes. The eggs are a dirty white, with black patches here and there, but not shaded off to any vinous colour like the chaffinch's. But as she is really one of the quite

wild birds who never approach the habitations of man, her eggs count for more than the greenfinch's, who builds in gardens as well as in the fields.

We next explore a dry shallow ditch, well covered though with vegetation; and I have my own ideas about this too, which of course on this particular day are bound to be realised. I tap the nettles and dandelions gently as I saunter along with watchful eyes and ears, and presently hear the softest possible rustle close to my feet; but I do not see the cause of it just at first. Keeping still, however, I soon observe a yellow-hammer a few yards farther on fidgeting about the hedge in a rather uncomfortable manner, and I feel instinctively that this is the bird I heard, and that his nest is close to my feet. It does not take long to find it—a nest of dried grass fitted into a little hollow in the bank, with three eggs in it, from the colour of which the bird derives his provincial name of “the writing lark.” They are not altogether unlike the reed-sparrow's; the ground is the same kind of dubious white, but the marking is different. They are scribbled all over with crooked black scrawls, just as if they had been made by a thick pen.

But we have another ditch-bank or two to search before we go to the brook, and in one of these, among some very thick grass, I am surprised and delighted to find a nest containing five blue eggs. At first I suppose them to belong to an eccentric hedge-sparrow,—but I soon see that the eggs are rather larger and a rather paler blue than the hedge-sparrow's, and I am quite at a loss to what bird to assign them. I take some of the eggs for the purpose of show-

ing them to Bill when I get home. But before returning we must explore the brook-side for a reed-warbler's or sedge-warbler's nest, the latter known as the mocking-bird from his power of imitating, —not, as Mr Hudson truly says, the song of other birds, but their notes of alarm or anger. The sedge bird builds, as may be supposed, by the sides of the brook. When there is a thorn bush overhanging it, he will place his nest on one of the branches which almost touch the water; or sometimes he will build in the stiff rushes out on the middle of it. We have not much difficulty in finding one of these, and in trying to get at it disturb a water-hen, whose nest also we find after a search, strongly and deeply embedded among the upright flags. It is a large nest, carpeted with dry rushes, and will hold eight or ten of the big reddish eggs which the water-hen lays. Taking toll of both nests, we now think it time to go home, and straight repair to the spot where we know Bill is at work. On looking at the blue eggs, and being told where they were found, he pronounces them to be the "Utick's," which on subsequent inquiry I found to be the provincial name of the whin-chat. I discovered the nest of this bird four or five times afterwards, I think — not oftener; for the county in which I lived was highly cultivated, and the whin-chat is fonder of commons and rough wastes where there are plenty of furze and brambles. It was several years before I found out that the Utick and the whin-chat were the same — the local name, like the chaffinch's name of Pink, being derived from its note.

It used to be a happy day with me when I went off with Bill to

one of the neighbouring gorses — that is, gorse fox-covers — to look for the brown linnet's nests. The gorse is the home of the linnet, and many other birds build in them as well; but to face them one required Archdeacon Denison's corduroy trousers, which stood up by themselves, to face the prickles: our legs looked as if they had been peppered with a charge of dust-shot for a week afterwards.

If I had only another day to spare, I would have carried my readers to the uplands, and shown them the nest of the skylark skilfully concealed just where the turf and the corn meet, the eggs being very much the colour of the earth; or together we would have hunted the fallows for the delicious plovers' eggs — there was no embargo on them then — which used to help out our somewhat meagre fare at a preparatory school after the Saturday half-holiday, when we came home with perhaps a dozen of them; or we would have startled the wood-pigeon (ring-dove, properly) out of the pollard willow in which she is so fond of nesting, or looked up at her in her flat transparent nest of sticks high up in the elm-tree, through which, when she is not on, you can often see the two white eggs; or we would have searched the long grass till we found the nest of the corn-crake, who is incessantly heard without ever being seen during the months of May and June. But the holidays are over; and if we are caught out of bounds at school, we shall suffer for it. After one of these expeditions we usually returned with eggs enough to fill a whole string. More shame for you, many people will say. But we knew no better. These were the dark ages; and with all their faults I love them still. Sir Hilde-

brand Osbaldistone attributed the change which he observed in English manners since the days of his youth partly to "the new turnips"—but partly also to "book learning." School boards, county councils, competitive examinations, mown stubbles, French partridges, university extensions, an improved moral tone, New Zealand mutton, threshing-machines, have done the same for the nineteenth century, and made us the very superior people that we are now, creating a much greater difference between the England of to-day and the England of 1840 than there was between the England of George I. and the England of Charles II. I have here been describing the simple pleasures of the simple-minded schoolboy who lived in the Saturnian age. There is nothing

heroic, nothing scientific, nothing to be of use in any "standard" in the bird's-nesting that I have described,—no dangerous climbing, no swimming, no discovery of some hitherto unattainable egg for which ornithologists have long been sighing. It is only the natural, untaught, traditional amusement of a healthy English boy as he was in the primitive time, when the world did not know that it was ignorant. We are all very much better now, no doubt; and such bird's-nesting as I was used to from ten to fifteen years of age will probably be pronounced barbarous, and very likely by the boys of the period voted slow, stupid, and contemptible. To myself, however, it is a pleasing reminiscence, and I hope some of my contemporaries may find it so too.

SIR SAMUEL FERGUSON'S LIFE.

It was Timothy Tickler who asked, in the course of one of the "Noctes Ambrosianæ," "Is 'The Forging of the Anchor' your own, Kit?" "I wish it were," replied the great Christopher. "But the world will yet hear of the writer." That was in the beginning of 1832, and it was the first introduction of Samuel Ferguson to the readers of 'Blackwood.' Many a time since then have our pages and those of the 'Dublin University Magazine,' and not a few others besides, been brightened by the erudition, the wisdom, and the wit that marked all that Ferguson wrote.

He was about twenty-one when "The forging of the Anchor" was published. Soon afterwards he came to Edinburgh, and was made welcome in its best literary circles. That his personality left a deep impression was proved in a curious way. When fifty-two years later he came again to the city to receive an honorary degree from the University on the occasion of its tercentenary celebration, he embraced the opportunity to renew old friendships.

"On a bright afternoon he called with his wife on Miss Blackwood, the daughter of the friend who had shown him so much kindness. . . . It so chanced that he and his wife entered the drawing-room unannounced, and before Miss Blackwood was aware of the presence of visitors they had reached the middle of the room. She rose from the fireside, and in a moment, holding up, and then holding out, both hands, said, 'Oh, Mr Ferguson, "The Wet Wooing"!' She laughed heartily, and continued, 'I shall never forget the reading of that

story to my father. He sat in this very chair in which I am now seated, and on that stool I read to him your MS. Oh, how we enjoyed it! Redrigg's "Canny Courtship"!' and Miss Blackwood again laughed with infectious hilarity at the remembrance of her own and her father's mirth."

The personality was indeed impressive, and the power of remaining young was rarely equalled, when, after so long an interval, such prompt recognition was possible. Shrewd kindness and kindly shrewdness marked him from youth to age, and when in the last weeks of his life the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland of the day had occasion to speak about him, the words he used were, "They are all so fond of him." A life marked by such characteristics, and extended through seventy-six years, full from boyhood onward of the utmost professional and literary activity, was well worthy of commemoration; and this has been nobly done by the one who knew it best.¹

The volumes are justly entitled 'Sir Samuel Ferguson in the Ireland of his Day.' For while Sir Samuel remains the central figure, he is surrounded by groups of friends, associates, and fellow-workers, and in these charming pages we see pass before us almost every famous Irishman of a period stretching over more than half a century. We see their characters portrayed as they revealed themselves to him, and in not a few instances the impressions that we receive are fresh in interest, and sometimes of real importance. And in addition there are throughout

¹ Sir Samuel Ferguson in the Ireland of his Day. By Lady Ferguson. In Two Volumes. William Blackwood & Sons, Edinburgh and London: 1896.

the volumes sketches of Irish life and Irish scenery, and bits of Irish history and archaeology, as they presented themselves to Ferguson's keen and friendly eye. And these sketches are not confined to Ireland alone, but extend to Scotland and England, and many of the most interesting parts of the Continent. The pages are enlivened by frequent quotations in prose and verse from Sir Samuel's writings and those of his friends.

Descended from one of the old Covenanting families which had migrated from the west of Scotland to Ulster, he was born in Belfast in 1810. He was eight-and-twenty before he was called to the Irish Bar, and in the meantime had not only studied his profession but published many papers of interest and importance. He married at thirty-eight. Eleven years later he became Queen's Counsel, and at the age of fifty-seven accepted the position of the first Deputy Keeper of the Records of Ireland. He afterwards received the honour of knighthood; and in 1881 he was elected President of the Royal Irish Academy, which corresponds to the Royal Societies of London and of Edinburgh. He was the Rhind Lecturer in Edinburgh in 1884; and in 1886 his life-work was finished, and he passed peacefully away.

In studying the man, the first feature that attracts our attention is his many-sidedness. It might be said of him, as of his greater countryman, *Nihil erat quod non tetigit*, and also with much truth, *Nihil tetigit quod non ornavit*. His professional life was divided into two parts—his career at the Bar, and his career as head of an official department. At the Bar he had, like most of his profession, to labour at a long uphill road with little apparent rise in it; but

from the first the agents who employed him found that they had a counsel of the utmost perspicacity, and most conscientious in the discharge of duty. We find that even on his wedding-day he visited Kilmainham gaol to confer with one of the prisoners of 1848 whom he had undertaken to defend. The prisoner was Richard Dalton Williams, who was indicted for treason felony as publisher of the 'Tribune' newspaper. His defence of Williams was most able, and the trial resulted in an acquittal,—the only acquittal attained among all the prisoners tried, in connection with the political troubles during the summer and autumn of 1848. In the North-East Circuit, which he joined, Ferguson enjoyed very considerable popularity, and both there and in the Dublin Courts he was specially employed in a class of cases requiring a knowledge of practical handicrafts. Many passages in his biography show how completely absorbed he became in fighting the battle for his clients both in civil and in criminal cases. Although success was not rapid, it was eminently satisfactory in the end. Both as junior and senior counsel he enjoyed the confidence and esteem of the profession. To accept the appointment of Deputy Keeper of the Public Records involved a very considerable sacrifice of professional income, but it secured congenial work for the rest of his life, and an income which, although not worthy of his ability, was amply sufficient for his requirements. And indeed it was as the head of a department that Ferguson's professional gifts shone most conspicuously. He no doubt mourned the loss of the old excitement of speech, examination, and cross-examination, and the constant freshness of str

ing new topics which enlivens the routine of a barrister's work. But to a man by nature so systematic and orderly, there was great delight in systematising the enormous accumulation of deeds which came to be under his care, and of devising methods whereby those coming in should most easily find their appropriate place, where they might be available for reference in after-days with a minimum of trouble. Himself punctiliously punctual, a like precision was required of every subordinate, and no one could prosper in his department who proved careless in that respect. The documents which fell to be arranged were scattered through many offices in Dublin, and perhaps elsewhere, and had to be brought together and classified; and one may judge of the magnitude of the work from the fact that one of these sources alone was estimated as supplying 169 tons of deeds. While the old accumulations were being reduced to order, the new records poured in with steady stream; and by special contrivances of the most ingenious kind, which we would respectfully commend to the attention of all occupying similar positions, he succeeded in distributing each to its appropriate place. Each year's work—and there were eighteen of them altogether—was crowned by the production of a report. These reports, though necessarily technical and often in their nature dry and uninteresting to the general reader, were always lucid, and sometimes luminous, and enriched with out-of-the-way fragments of historic or legal lore. To some it might seem as if the work were mainly the drudgery of calendering; but to Ferguson, who regarded with intense interest every fact in Irish history, and cherished a patriotic pride in the

muniments of his country, each day's work was charged with un-failing interest.

With Ferguson, as with many others, the interest centres less upon the work by which his income was earned than upon other occupations. We have heard a great Irish scholar say that in his judgment Ferguson was the greatest poet that Ireland had produced. It may be difficult to subscribe to this estimate when we remember Goldsmith and Moore. "The Deserted Village" and "The Traveller" on the one hand, and many of the Irish Melodies on the other, have held, and must hold, a place which Ferguson himself would have been the last to claim. Still it implies a great deal that a high authority on such questions should have formed, and deliberately expressed, such an opinion. And certainly, if Ferguson did not deserve the first, he deserved a leading place among Irish poets. His chief poems are founded upon old Irish legends, with all the details of which he was familiar: they are true to the scenes in which they are placed, as well as to human nature, and they are touched with fine imagination, enriched by wide culture, and expressed with conspicuous felicity.

His descriptions of scenery are often vivid and telling. The Hill of Howth, the Ben Adar of Columba's day, was a frequent and favourite resort of Ferguson, and the sketch of the view from its cliffs seems to tell both of observation of nature and personal experience:—

"The wide pale-heaving floor crisped
by a curling wind,
With all its shifting, shadowy belts, and
chasing scopes of green,
Sun-strown, foam-freckled, sail-em-
bossed, and blackening squalls be-
tween,

And slant, cerulean-skirted showers that
 with a drowsy sound,
 Heard inward, of ebullient waves, stalk
 all the horizon round;
 And—haply, being a citizen just 'scaped
 from some disease
 That long has held him sick indoors,
 now, in the brine-fresh breeze,
 Health-salted, bathes; and says, the
 while he breathes reviving bliss,
 'I'm not good enough, O God, nor pure
 enough for this!'

Readers will turn with interest to "The Forging of the Anchor," which, as we have seen, won for its author Christopher North's esteem. We may extract a few lines of its vigorous measure:—

"Come, see the Dolphin's Anchor
 forg'd; 'tis a white heat now:
 The bellows ceased, the flames decreased;
 though on the forge's brow,
 The little flames still fitfully play
 through the sable mound;
 And fitfully you still may see the grim
 smiths ranking round,
 All clad in leathern panoply, their
 broad hands only bare;
 Some rest upon their sledges here,
 some work the windlass there."

Ferguson's greatest poem was "Congal." Its leading incidents are derived from the Irish bardic romance, "The Battle of Moyra." While growing out of the Irish original, it assumed in many respects an independent outline and structure. Ferguson tells us in his preface that this battle is known to have been fought in A.D. 637. The poem is an epic of great power and much interest. It is scarcely possible, however, to give a conception of its character by quotation. We cite the opinion of Judge O'Hagan:—

"The greatest poem which Sir Samuel Ferguson has written is, in our estimation, his 'Congal,' published in 1872. It is a genuine Irish epic, based, like other epics, upon mingled history and legend, having

its roots in the deepest human passions—wrath, love, ambition, revenge—and with these passions shaped by destiny to a fatal end. No poem so Homeric in the march of the narrative, in the character of the heroes, or in the resonant majesty of the versification, has appeared in our time, and withal it is thoroughly and in essence Celtic."

"I like in 'Congal' the full flow of its verse," said Lady Wilde, "with the strong, firm rhymes, always pure and musical, yet never obtrusive on the ear by strangeness or straining; and throughout there is the rapid throb of young heroic blood. Yet one is also often reminded that the author is well versed in the highest classic models."

Ferguson's services to Irish and to general archaeology were of real and permanent value, and may be referred to the three categories of original research—the correlation of archaeology proper and history at points where these sciences meet, and the popularising of both branches of knowledge.

In regard to original work, his researches on Oghams—a variety of Runic inscription—deserve the foremost place. The subject had received much attention, and Ferguson's friend Dr Graves, the Lord Bishop of Limerick, had studied it with great care, and was the first to demonstrate that the key to Oghams given in the 'Book of Ballymote' was really authentic and reliable. For long years Ferguson was a diligent student of all that pertained to the subject, and he discovered Ogham inscriptions in numerous localities, and recorded them by a method of perfect accuracy which is described in the following words:—

"For the purposes of study, as well as for facility of arrangement and economy of space, casts in paper, of

adequate strength, are much preferable to reproductions in plaster or metal. To enable the student to give an undivided attention to such objects, it is necessary that they should be easily moved, so as to be placed in convenient lights and points of view. The difficulty of so dealing with heavy masses has greatly detracted from the value, for practical purposes, of the inscribed stones, which have from time to time been brought from their sites in the country, and placed in public and private museums. Any one undertaking the systematic study of such a collection must be prepared to move considerable weights, must work under various inconveniences of posture, and submit to frequent interruptions dependent on changes of light and shade. The employment of paper duplicates, while affording entire freedom from these disadvantages, with the additional facility of a surface possessing uniformity of colour, will also, it is hoped, dispense with the temptation to further disturbance of the inscribed monuments still occupying their ancient sites."

He was the first to demonstrate the importance of working from actual facsimiles rather than drawings, rubbings, or photographs, and he made a splendid collection from all the available original sources, which supplies data for a really scientific study of the difficult and intricate questions. The elaborate work of Brash is less satisfactory than Ferguson's, because he relied upon inferior methods, and allowed himself more liberty in interpretation than Sir Samuel was wont to do. If Ferguson was not clear about an interpretation he said so plainly. His Rhind Lectures constituted a severely scientific study of the subject, and one cannot but admire the way in which Ferguson refused to give rein to his imagination and render these lectures popular, as he might easily have done, preferring rather to act

upon his conviction that such a course should be of a strictly scientific character. The result is that these lectures are not easy and generally interesting reading, but are like an authoritative lexicon to which the student of the subject may turn for guidance.

Another branch of original work was in connection with his hagiological inquiries. The old saints of Ireland—their characters, their learning, their homes, their mission-wanderings, and their astonishing successes—always fascinated him, and few have worked harder at the investigation of their history. One wishes that he had written a complete work regarding them. His critical investigation of the Patrician Documents, comparison of the various codices, and such-like, are models of scientific analysis. His papers on the 'Confession' and the 'Epistle to Coroticus,' which he brought before the Royal Irish Academy, afford at once evidence of Ferguson's erudition and the noble and saintly character of Patrick. As another illustration of Ferguson's original research, we may turn to his learned and ingenious papers upon the foreign expedition of a certain King Dathi, of which a somewhat detailed account is given in the biography (vol. ii. p. 50 *et seq.*) This research bears upon the story which has been handed down, that Dathi, the last pagan king of Ireland and a nephew of Nial of the Nine Hostages, and whose mound and pillar still exist at Rathcroghan, was killed by lightning while conducting an expedition in the Alps about the year 428 of our era. Ferguson's paper renders it very probable that the tradition is correct, and that his death occurred in the neighbourhood of Pfeffers, at the upper end of the Wallenstadter See, which one

passes now by railway on the way to Coire or Davos. It is startling to think of a local Irish magnate conducting an expedition to that district in those days.

But there is no one who has done so much to popularise the facts of archaeology and of ancient Irish history and tradition. His tales and his poems have revealed a whole world of interesting facts and stories. Take as examples his poems dealing with the cycle of legends connected with the history of Conor MacNessa, or his prose tales entitled '*Hibernian Nights' Entertainments*.'

In an article which we published nearly ten years ago¹ we went somewhat carefully over that group of poems, and shall not dwell upon them now. The only remark we desire to make is that the poems are works of imagination, but they are true in a surprising degree to the facts of nature in scenery and topography, and to the weird and touching stories which have floated down through the centuries.

The '*Hibernian Nights' Entertainments*' present in vivid form the accounts of old stories of Irish history. They tell the tales in such a way as to excite the greatest interest, the only hindrance to their popularity being the often unpronounceable Irish names, which, although no doubt very easy to accomplished scholars like Ferguson, are apt to trouble the reader who is not familiar with the comparatively simple pronunciation of the "long-nebbit" words.

One naturally looks with interest to see what opinions Ferguson held in regard to the perplexing problems of Irish policy which have so disturbed statesmen and hindered parliamentary progress of recent years. Few could speak on

these questions with greater authority — for Ferguson was an ardent lover of his country, and during a period of more than fifty years he knew the men who made its history. He was familiar not with the leading men alone, but with the rural peasantry and with the poor of the towns, with the Orangemen of Ulster and the fervid Catholics of Cork, the imaginative denizens of Connemara and the alert and impulsive citizens of Dublin. He knew the difficulties of the poor, the difficulties of the landlords, the difficulties proper to each group of the people, and the supreme difficulty of getting all the groups to pull together in any particular direction. He was a Conservative by conviction, although never an active party politician. There can be no doubt that his opinions underwent a considerable change as life advanced, or at least that during the awful year of the famine, and the almost more distressing ones which followed, he advocated plans which later experience led him to disapprove. Certainly in later life he dissociated himself from what may be called the further development of views which in earlier years he had sanctioned.

Like so many of his countrymen, he was keenly alive to the contemptuous, satirical, or at best patronising attitude of the English mind towards Ireland. He burned with indignation against English writers who spoke slightly of his country and its claims, and still more against those unworthy Irishmen who, having emigrated to London, disparaged or maligned the land from which they sprang.

Ferguson was keenly desirous

¹ *Vide 'Maga' for November 1886.*

of developing Ireland in every respect. He wished its antiquities to be known, its ancient paths to be explored and understood, its quaint and mysterious legends to be gathered up and woven together so as to form, as far as possible, a true story of his country. He wished its poetry to be studied, its literature, its science, its art to be advanced. He wished Dublin to become, as he said, at least a better Edinburgh, if it could not take the first rank of all the cities of the world. With such feelings he was naturally much in sympathy with the "Young Ireland" party, and indeed he went a good way with them in some of their views. But when many years later he was asked to express an opinion of Home Rule as it came to be espoused and expressed by Mr Gladstone, he showed himself to be absolutely opposed to it, and justified his consistency by such a statement as this :—

"I sympathised with the Young Ireland poets and patriots while their aims were directed to a restoration of Grattan's Parliament in which all the estates of the realm should have their old places. But I have quite ceased to sympathise with their successors who have converted their high aspirations to a sordid social war of classes carried on by the vilest methods."

All through these many years we can trace in his writings in prose and in verse his keen perception of the humorous side of questions as they emerged, and of the various parties who maintained one side or the other. In "Father Tom and the Pope," which delighted the readers of 'Maga' in the days when 'Maga' used to say some things which 'Maga' would scarcely utter now, he showed how he could hit off the

quizzical side of the controversialist who fought the battle of the Church of Rome.

His ballad of "The Loyal Orangeman" shows his keen appreciation of the peculiarities of some of the extreme section of his fellow-countrymen of Ulster :—

"A am a loyal Orangeman
From Portadown upon the Bann ;
My loyalty, A will maintain,
Was ever and always without stain,
Though rebelly Papishes may call
My loyalty 'conditional.'
A never did insist upon
Nor ask condition beyont the one—
The crown o' the causeway on road and
street,
And the Papishes put under my feet !"

Later on we have his thoughts upon the proposal by Mr Gladstone to create an Irish University from whose curriculum theology and history should be excluded :—

"Come, scholar, come, and see my
latest rarity,
My Dublin University behold with
pride.
A *Universum* framed with such particularity,
It leaves one-half the circle of the
sciences outside.

For so long as the segment shall equal
the periphery,
So long as the part shall be greater
than the whole,
That youth will best be qualified for
wearing manhood's livery
Who knows nothing of his country, or
his Maker, or his soul !"

And in the dreadful days when the whole country looked with horror at the atrocities of the wretched men who called themselves Invincibles, and at the follies and crimes of those who were tools of plotters who kept themselves in a safe obscurity, he poured out such scathing denunciations as "The Curse of the Joyces," and the soliloquy of Carey the informer as he was waiting in the Phœnix

Park to give the signal for the murder of Mr Burke and Lord Frederick Cavendish :—

"Not yet in sight. 'Twere well to step aside,
Beyond the common eye-shot, till he comes.

He—I've no quarrel under heaven with him :

I'd rather it were Forster ; rather still
One higher up than either ; but since Fate

Or Chance has so determined, be it he.
How cool I feel ; and all my wits about
And vigilant ; and such a work in hand !

Yes : loitering here, unoccupied, may draw

Remark and question. How came such a one there ?

Oh ; I've strolled out to see the polo-players :

I'll step across to them ; but keep an eye

On who comes up the highway."

There is even beyond this another poem in which an attempt is made to represent the mood of mind of some ecclesiastic who, Ferguson imagined, might have felt himself not free from the guilt of connivance in the Phoenix Park murders.

But it is always pleasant to turn away from the subject of Irish politics, and we gladly revert to more agreeable matters. Among all the charming qualities of Ferguson, one of the most delightful was his relationship to his friends. His own feelings *de amicitia* were well expressed in the epic of "Congal" :—

"Thou who givest to men wives,
children, riches, fame,
And rarer than the worth of wives,
and which the wealth transcends
Of fame, as fame the worth of gold—
who givest a man his friends,
thank and praise Thee."

Open the volumes almost anywhere, and one meets with sketches of the career and character of friends. The difficulty is to select

so as to give our readers an idea of their number and their fine qualities. We may, to begin with, instance a group whom we find gathered round him in connection with a Shakespeare reading which was held in his house in January 1869. What a brilliant group they are ! many of them famous men :—

"A SOUVENIR OF TUESDAY EVENING,
19th Jan. 1869.

"Prologue to last Three Acts of '*Cymbeline*,' with a List of Readers.

"*Cymbeline*, Dr Stokes ; *Cloten*, Professor (now Sir Robert) Ball ; *Posthumus*, Rev. R. P. Graves, LL.D. ; *Belarius*, Sir Samuel Ferguson ; *Guiderius*, Mr Palmer, F.T.C.D. ; *Arviragus*, Professor Edward Dowden ; *Iachimo*, Mr Thomas Ferguson ; *Lucius*, Rev. Dr Salmon (Provost of T.C.D.) ; *Senator*, Mr A. P. Graves ; *Captain*, Mr John Clarke ; *Pisania*, Dr Ingram (President R.I.A.) ; *Cornelius*, Rev. J. P. Mahaffy, F.T.C.D. ; *Queen*, Miss Stokes ; *Imogen*, Miss Laura Darley ; *Lady*, Mrs Mahaffy."

The reader will note how pleasant the evening must have been as they read the three last Acts of "*Cymbeline*." The story of the earlier Acts is told in a charming Breviate, from which we must quote a few introductory lines :—

"Ye lovely ladies, and ye men of might,

'Tis '*Cymbeline*' shall be our play to-night ;

But since at large to read the text were long,

Our gentle Shakespeare will forgive the wrong,

If I the fore-plot of the piece rehearse
In lines foreshortened and shortcoming verse.

Know, then, till perjured Iachimo appear,

We all, to-night, are Ancient Britons here ;

And this room, England, ere the English name

And tongue of Shakespeare with the Saxons came."

The volumes tell us much of the various readers. The part of *Cymbeline* was taken by Dr Stokes, famous as a physician and an archæologist. He was, like Ferguson, the friend of all the best Irishmen of his day, and is described in one of Ferguson's letters as the "friend and promoter of everything we can speak of with any pride that has been achieved in this poor country during the last half-century." He was *Regius Professor of Medicine* in Trinity College, and wrote some admirable works on professional subjects, but also others of more general interest, such as the '*Life of Dr Petrie*,' the great archæologist. He was the companion of Ferguson, not only in such evenings as this, but in many a quiet hour in town and country. With his violin, his rich humour, his store of old-world knowledge, his shrewdness and force of character, he made an almost ideal companion in excursions archæological and artistic or purely for holiday.

Cloten was represented by Professor (now Sir Robert) Ball, who at the present day adorns Cambridge as he long adorned Dublin. He is known to all the world by his charming '*Story of the Heavens*,' and other books.

The part of *Posthumus* was read by the Rev. Dr Perceval Graves, nephew of the great physician, and brother of the Bishop of Limerick. He was a finished scholar, and an old and tried friend of Ferguson. His biography of Sir William Rowan Hamilton is a standard work. He always took a special interest in such evenings as we are describing. To him, indeed, Sir Samuel dedicated the '*Breviates*' of the Shakespearian plays, which proved so great a help in connection with the readings. The dedication so lets us into the spirit of

those who shared these pleasures that we must quote from it a few lines:—

"Graves, first to light the lamp that
brightest burns
Amidst our City's cinerary urns,
Whose voice interpretive of every shade
Of thought and feeling, has so often
made,
In Shakespeare Readings 'mongst our
joint compeers,
Dublin delightful, these last twenty
years;
Accept—and view it with a favouring
mind—
This Book of Breviates by your friend
designed
To bring the Plays you love within the
reach
And compass of a two hours' reading
each.
Farewell, old friend; may many a
union yet
Of gentle spirits give us to forget,
In his perennial youth, our weight of
years,
Our cares of duty, and our country's
tears."

The part of *Belarius* was taken by Sir Samuel himself; but we cannot linger over every name in the brilliant catalogue, and must select next that of Professor Edward Dowden, so well known by his able work on '*Shakespeare: A Study of his Mind and Art*,' as well as by his '*Life of Shelley*,' and many other writings. He took the part of *Arviragus*.

That of *Lucius* was intrusted to the Rev. Dr Salmon, the present Provost of Trinity College, great alike in mathematics and theology, and already, in 1869, a man of world-wide fame. His readings were always a delight to his friends, especially when he undertook a humorous character.

Mr A. P. Graves, who is now well known as the author of "*Father O'Flynn*," as well as of many more serious efforts in prose and verse, took the part of *Senator*.

Dr Ingram, who succeeded Ferguson as President of the Royal Irish Academy, and a distinguished ornament of Trinity College, appeared as *Pisanio*.

Cornelius was represented by the eminent Professor Mahaffy, a Doctor of Divinity and of Music, celebrated as the author of many works on many subjects, but especially of a series dealing with Greek life and Greek history from the days of Alexander onwards.

The Queen was played by Miss Margaret Stokes, daughter of the great physician and author of books on Irish archaeology and Irish art, alike cautious in regard to facts and scholarly in respect of statement.

There are other names besides, but these may suffice to show how brilliant was the company, and how telling the rendering must have been. When one considers, too, that the readers were by no means the only eminent persons who shared the enjoyment, but the rooms were replete with the intellectual and literary personages of Dublin, we can well understand how charming the gatherings were. Many must wish that we had more of such Readings in Edinburgh.

But the group we have named gives merely an indication of the long series of Ferguson's friends of whom we find sketches or portraits in these volumes, and we must take time to refer to a few more of them.

Dr Petrie, the great archaeologist, whose works on the Round Towers of Ireland and on Tara Hill take rank with the best literature of their kind, deserves a foremost place. He was often spoken of as "dear Petrie." The letters interchanged between Ferguson and him on literary and antiquarian subjects give a graphic

picture of the man and his studies, and make the reader wish for a more detailed knowledge of his life and work, such as is afforded by the biography written by Dr Stokes.

Petrie was surrounded by a group of fellow-workers on Irish antiquities, who cherished the ambition to investigate all existing remains, both Christian and pagan, on Irish soil, with the topography of the land, and the orthography of ancient names of baronies, town-lands, and parishes. One of the most active was Captain (afterwards Sir Thomas) Larcom, whose introduction to the first volume of the 'Ordnance Survey' is so judicious that one cannot but wish that the original plan had been carried out in its entirety:—

"A perfect map, with a perfect memoir, should constitute the statistics of a country: such a combination has been attempted in the Survey of Ireland, and though it is not to be assumed that perfection has been attained, no pains have been spared to fulfil the enlightened intentions of the Legislature. Geography is a noble and practical science only when associated with the history, the commerce, and a knowledge of the productions of a country; and the topographical delineation of a county would be comparatively useless without the information which may lead to and suggest the proper development of its resources."

Among the most capable workers of the band was John O'Donovan, a very able man, a thorough master of the Irish language. Though like a simple peasant in manners, he was a learned scholar, and a perfect gentleman at heart. His greatest work was the translation, with illustrative notes, of the 'Annals of the Four Masters.' These four Masters compiled the annals of their country from the

earliest ages up to the year 1616, and their work was transcribed in the Franciscan Monastery at Donegal. O'Donovan edited it in such a way as to satisfy the most exacting experts, and illustrated it by notes of the utmost value.

Sir William Rowan Hamilton is sketched by Lady Ferguson, also Professors Sedgwick and De Morgan, Dr Romney Robinson of Armagh, Clarence Mangan the poet, and O'Curry, who lectured so brilliantly in the Catholic University on the manuscript material of early Irish history. Archbishop Whately's Irish career is sketched for us by Ferguson himself in a suggested epitaph:—

"Here lie I, Richard Whately,
Archbishop of Dublin lately,
Who, for the amelioration
Of the ignorant Irish nation,
Coming hither with much vain know-
ledge,
Have learned in these poor people's
College
Some things have been a boon to me
Were heretofore unknown to me.
I taught quibble,
And learnt the Bible;
I brought ability,
And took away humility."

Carleton, whose *Tales* live in the memory of most, and whose story of "The Lend of the Loan of a Gridiron" is so widely known, was recognised by Ferguson as an accurate delineator of Irish character. Edward Forbes, whose premature death many in Edinburgh still remember, was one of Ferguson's friends. Emerson Tennent was another, and both these find their places in the volumes. Lord O'Hagan and Judge O'Hagan were close and intimate friends, and Thomas Davis, whose premature death Ferguson sang in beautiful verses.

It is interesting to hear Smith O'Brien spoken of, by one who

knew him well, as a gentleman of birth and position, and a man of fine presence and chivalrous honour. He "went out" in 1848, although he well knew the hopelessness of a rising in which he was followed by a mere handful of undisciplined peasants. But he went out because he considered himself bound to share the peril which his speeches had incited the people to incur. His word was sacred, his friendship steadfast, and his life unstained by guile or selfishness. Along with this personage, who was a friend, we may mention another who at least moved in the same circles, Mrs Parnell, the mother of Charles Stuart Parnell. We are told that her receptions were very agreeable. She was an American by birth. During the Fenian excitement she called upon Ferguson and told him that her house had been visited by emissaries from the Castle, who opened her desk, examined her papers, read private letters. "How can I punish them for this insult?" she asked. "These are disturbed times," replied Ferguson. "It is the duty of the Government to take precautions. It is rumoured—I do not inquire if it be true—that you have had Stephens, the Fenian Head Centre, concealed in your house. Remember you are an alien accepting the hospitality of the British Government. It is your duty to abstain from all political intrigues. I strongly urge you to do so in future. You have nothing to complain of, nor any claim for redress." But he felt that he produced no impression.

Thomas D'Arcy M'Gee was in Ferguson's judgment the greatest poet of all the Young Ireland group, and many a pleasant interchange of poems and letters and

of bright sparkling talk took place between them. In this biography we find that to the very last the exiled Irishman, having outgrown the crudities of his early ideas and become one of the foremost statesmen of Canada, retained his ardent affection for his native land. This passion of his heart comes out in various poems. We quote a verse from "Am I remembered?"—

"Am I remembered in Erin—

I charge you, speak me true—
Has my name a sound, a meaning,
In the scenes my boyhood knew?
Does the heart of the Mother ever
Recall her exile's name?
For to be forgot in Erin
And on earth is all the same."

And in one of his last songs, written in 1868, shortly before he was murdered by a Fenian assassin, he, an exile in Canada, pictures the heart-longing of Columba for his native Ireland, and one can read the feelings of M'Gee in the words which he puts into the mouth of the saint. Columba is represented as addressing a bird which had flown over from Ireland to Iona. It begins:—

"Cling to my breast, my Irish bird,
Poor storm-tossed stranger, sore
afraid!
How sadly is thy beauty blurred—
The wing whose hue was as the curd,
Rough as the sea-gull's pinion
made!
For you and I are exiles both—
Rest you, wanderer, rest you here!
Soon fair winds shall waft you forth
Back to our own beloved North—
Would God I could go with you,
dear!"

Dr Reeves, afterwards the Bishop of Down and Connor, whose biography Lady Ferguson has written, is well seen also in these volumes. And his great work, the translation of Adamnan's 'Life of Columba,' is repeatedly referred to.

In a tour to Killarney we find Ferguson in the company of Charles Knight and Douglas Jerrold. What glorious times they must have had as they sailed about upon the lakes or conversed together in the evenings!

The close and long friendship with Sir Frederick Burton is illustrated in many pages. The late Lord Dunraven, of great repute as an investigator of Irish antiquities, Campbell of Islay, Dr Todd, Whitley Stokes, and Sir Arthur Mitchell, were among the much esteemed archaeological correspondents and friends. And there are delightful sketches or accounts of Archbishop Trench, of General Chesney of Euphrates Valley fame, of Professor Adams the astronomer, of Mahaffy and Haughton and Blackie, of Aubrey de Vere and Allingham, of Sir Theodore and Lady Martin, and many more. But these are only specimens of what the reader will find in the biography.

As we have gone on with our study of the volumes, we have become more and more impressed with their wealth of interesting facts regarding Ferguson himself and the Ireland in which he lived. The charm of his personal character, and the solid excellence of his achievements in so many different departments, have ever become more vividly impressed upon us. Our own perusal of the volumes makes us wish that his sweet and strong and beautiful character should be widely known among our readers, and that this affectionate but judicious monument to her husband's memory which Lady Ferguson has reared should be, as it deserves, well known to the lovers of good books, and permanently valued. It is a delightful record of a delightful life.

A PIECE OF PRESUMPTION.

When any person has disappeared, and has not been heard of for seven years or upwards, the Court may decree that he shall be presumed to have died exactly seven years after the date on which he was last known to be alive.—*Vide* The Presumption of Life Limitation (Scot.) Act, 1891.

I ALWAYS thought the law was sure, although its course was long ;
I always thought a judge was right, whoever else was wrong ;
I always thought that when a Court presumed a man was dead,
’Twas just as good as hanging him or cutting off his head.

But now strange doubts disturb my mind, strange dreams arise at night ;
I dare not think a judge is wrong—but some one is not right :
I find that though a Court decrees a man is not in life,
’Twill make him wed his widow, though she’s some one else’s wife.

I left my wife and native land some fifteen years ago :
I could not stand her nagging tongue, and funds were running low.
I wandered here, I wandered there, the time passed swiftly by,
And single life was full of peace beneath the southern sky.

Oh ! what a cursed fool was I to quit my quiet ease,
My sunny skies, my pleasant shade, again to cross the seas.
Why did I buy that paper, wherein one day I read
Some learned Lord of Session had presumed that I was dead ?

“ And so,” thought I, “ I’ve ceased to live, death pays all debts in full ;
My wife is now my widow and has lost her right to rule.
I’d like to see old Scotland since its laws have set me free ;
I’d like to pray beside the tomb of him who once was me.”

I packed my small belongings and sailed that very day ;
I visited the graveyard where the family ashes lay ;
I read my name upon a slab, the date I first drew breath,
An extract from the Court’s decree which fixed my date of death.

I thought of what a life I’d led before I crossed the sea ;
I prayed that all the other dead were now in heaven like me.
The wind was east, the driving haar was wet as heavy rain,—
I turned my back upon my tomb and vowed I’d start again.

“ But first,” said I, “ I’ll make a call, before I sail away,
Upon the family lawyers, just to hear what they’ve to say.”
I went ; I wrote upon a card the name which once I bore ;
The senior partner started up,—I rather think he swore.

Then horrid threats and horrid names and horrid words were used ;
Of every crime and dirty trick I think I was accused.
He spoke of vile impostors,—but I saw he knew my face.
He asked me for the evidence I had to prove my case.

I told him what convinced him ; but said, " You need not fear
That I've come back to trouble you,—I shan't again appear."
Said he, " You're not in earnest : I presume you are aware
Your uncle died a year ago, and you're his nearest heir ?"

Quoth I, " That makes a difference ; but then you know I'm dead.
Who owns the land at present ? Who is reigning in my stead ?"
Said he, " One cousin got your land, another got your wife ;
But doubtless both will give them up when you return to life.

" We'll raise an action in the Court, again we'll get decree ;
Our costs will be a trifle, besides the counsel's fee."
" Well, well," said I, " when that is done, perhaps I'll take the land,
But 'twould be mean to oust the man who owns my widow's hand."

" You must," said he, " take all or none : our law does not contrive
To modify the miracle and make you half alive.
You'll come to life." " I won't," said I ; " I swear I'll make a row."
" Pooh, pooh," quoth he, " the Court won't hear ; you're dead, you see,
just now."

He wrote and told my cousins, when of course a fight began,
For one declared that I was dead—as dead as good Queen Anne ;
The other swore I was in life, and offered to denude ;
But I refused to take his wife, although I am no prude.

They took the matter to the Court ; one locked me up in jail,
And vainly strove to keep the judge from freeing me on bail.
" He'll run away, my lord," said he, " and then my case is lost ;
My wife will still remain my wife if he remains a ghost."

The other got me set at large, then tried to split my head ;
You see they scarce could hang him for killing what was dead ;
And twice he tried to poison me before I got away,
And took a ship and sailed for peace to Delagoa Bay.

And while I lie and smoke my pipe I think about my fate ;
Am I a corpse or spirit, or the laird of an estate ?
Am I my widow's husband, or to whom does she belong ?
And if the Court of Session's right, pray who is it that's wrong ?

R.S.V.P.

RECENT HOME-POLITICS IN GERMANY.

THE second quarter-century of Imperial Germany has been inaugurated by two events of very different inception, but of a certain community in significance,—the Teachers' Payment Bill in the Prussian Parliament, and Stöcker's separation from the Conservative party. Thus defined, their points of departure would seem more obvious than their point in common; but a nearer consideration reveals a connecting-link in Social Democracy, the one great fact of German politics to-day. Great in numbers—for they exceed two millions—greater still in organisation and steadfastness of purpose, great too in the quality of their leaders, and assisted even to a spurious greatness by their attitude under opposition, the Social Democrats are undoubtedly the central problem which the next twenty-five years will have to solve. They have paralysed the sympathies of the State, which attempts therefore to effect their uprooting by a policy of inaccessible terrorism. They have adapted to their service tools which were fashioned for their destruction: anti-Semitism, for instance, and the Christian Socialism of the Conservative clergy are doing their work. They have crept, almost unconsciously, into the counsels of culture, which presents, in its most conspicuous development, affinity with their aims; and to an outside observer of the very grim game, their influence, whether directly, by faith, or indirectly, by fear, is everywhere to the front. English journalists, wisely enough, especially after the recent amenities, have abstained of late from pointing out to the German Gov-

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ernment, as invested in the President of the Police, their sense of the folly of its policy. The illuminating letters of the 'Times' correspondent, for example, during the recent era of restriction, did us no little harm in Berlin. There, unfortunately, our chief popularity is among the pariah Social Democrats themselves, who thank us for Darwin, for our example of freedom, and for our hospitality to Karl Marx. Under these circumstances, the advice which we gratuitously offered was construed, in some quarters, into an admission of collusion with that party—an absurdity which we may commend to the vigilance of the police, to whose intelligence it was no doubt due. For whatever our view as to the blessings of liberty, and however frank our acceptance of the coming democracy in England, we cannot but defer to the right of Germany to deal as she will with her own. Her apology indeed may very well be just. Modern Prussia, the tenderly nurtured offspring of Titans, is not yet old enough to claim to think for herself. It is pointed out that she was brought into existence in defiance of public opinion; that her Church, her army, and her schools, all that keeps her what she is, are carried on without public opinion; and the conclusion is drawn that, certain drawbacks notwithstanding, she will still be better and happier for the want of that equivocal boon. Nor is the present attitude of the Social Democratic party without a suspicion of attitudinising. The frequent prosecutions on seemingly trivial charges of *lèse-majesté* which preceded the opening of the Reichstag gave

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good opportunity for an injured innocence and cheap martyrdom display. Herr Bebel's long and eloquent speech on the 11th of December last might have been final but for its historical inconsistency. He asserted that the restrictive action, which had been carried so far as to suspend the local committees of his party, was a course wholly unjustified and suggestive of civil war. While admitting that he was not leading a chorus of angels,—they did not dance to prison because their principles had been insulted,—he yet claimed that they were patriotic and peaceable citizens, content with the security of their own salvation in the coming damnation of creeds and parties :—

"We have always declared that we could never oppose the spontaneous and universal development of Germany. On the contrary, it is above all to our interest that middle-class society should come to a natural end. Our task it is to draw attention to the evil condition of society to-day, and this call we have hitherto faithfully followed. Is it likely that we should tear up our own power and destroy the foundations on which we stand? Nay, we can picture Germany without government, but not without Social Democracy. . . . They say, We will govern, and lo! they are governed. And while everything is working for us in this way, are *we* likely to use force, *we* to disturb the prosperous course of evolution, *we* to cheat our own hopes? . . . Why, then, these restrictions, and against whom?"

It was at once pointed out by such of the newspapers as refrained from casting obloquy on the speech as a whole that here was a virtual retraction of policy, loyally to be ascribed to the increased stringency of legislation. Certainly, though it accords with the patient fatalism of Marx, and though some ethically allied associations, the Society for Ethical

Culture, for example, whose amiable and academic editor was among the victims of prosecution, would subscribe to every item of these sentiments, the main body of Social Democrats, as such, is scarcely recognisable here. The voice was the voice of Esau. It is possible to force evolution even without crossing the boundary to revolution; and to swamp the Reichstag with supporters, to disseminate anti-monarchical literature, to claim illegitimate rights, and otherwise to disturb order, is hardly to contemplate the approach of society to its "natural end." The problem—whatever its solution—is still a very present danger, and in Stöcker's defection from the Conservative party and in the Prussian schoolmaster at bay the incumbence of Social Democracy has recently been vividly illustrated. Leaving, then, the general question as we find it, these two aspects merit some consideration.

Among the crusades which went out to do battle with Social Democracy the Church was prominent. Whether it is well for the Church to take part in political matters at all, history nowhere very clearly says. Certainly, in this instance, there is evidence to the contrary. The remedy was worse than the disease, and the interference of the Church has resulted in a far more dangerous movement with a far more active propaganda. It is now nearly twenty years since Adolf Stöcker, by adapting the *ex cathedra* teaching of Professors Wagner and Schmoller, founded Christian Socialism on the basis of the Conservative party, to attack Social Democracy as unpractical, unchristian, and unpatriotic; to strive after a harmonious organisation of labour in due relation to the other factors of political life; and to aim at a lessening of the differences be-

tween rich and poor, and a greater economic security. By the last two items on their programme the defeat of the first is being brought about. Gradually during these years the Conservatives have been drawing more and more shyly away from the pioneers whom they started with such lofty intentions; and for the last few months Stöcker has been visibly coquetting between the waning attachment of his fashionable flock and the dangerous allurements of independence. Quite recently, under pressure of a direct challenge, he has thrown in his lot with the movement which he founded — without foresight of the end. At a Congress held at Frankfort-on-Main on February 26th, the exit of Stöcker from the Conservative fraction was approved, and the assembled delegates were constituted a self-standing Christian Socialist party, to be organised and spread under his presidency. But Christian Socialism, meanwhile, has started on a career whence no heroic measures can recall it. Originally Stöcker's invention, and now his sole denomination, the name has become identified with a smaller party and a taller programme, both ultimately springing from his initiative, but categorically repudiated by him at the Frankfort Congress. For, like another Balaam, the band that was sent out to combat Social Democracy stayed to further its objects. Step by step it incurred the suspicions of its Conservative authors, until as recently as November the schism was effected, and Pastor Naumann, with 'De Hilfe' as his organ, assumed the leadership of the seceding offshoot, now technically known as the *young* Christian Socialist party. The split which Naumann began has been completed, ironically enough, by Stöcker's fall, the sins of the chil-

dren being visited on the father, despite his disavowal of their views. Whether he started in a spirit of sincerity or sensation, from earnest conviction or for shallow self-advertisement, his Frankenstein has ridden him down. As was remarked in the 'National Zeitung,' when Naumann's defection was in the air—

"The majority, no doubt, of the clergy thus tarred with the brush of Socialism genuinely intend to march against the evils of Social Democracy. But it is the old folly—Satan is to drive out Beelzebub. The Social Democrats look on and laugh, while the claptrap of the clergy works their will unasked. . . . Why should they care under what flag, in what uniform, their confederates fight? Still they know that on the great day of reckoning all flags will sink before the red, all rivulets mingle in the great stream. When first the Church meddled with the social movement, she began the ominous mistake of attaching herself to one party instead of presiding over all. . . . Not the Liberals only, but probably most Conservatives, agree in this, that the extreme of the Christian Socialist priesthood can no longer be covered by the Conservative shield. They are the enemies within the camp."

How precisely the revolted clergy have incurred this charge requires a little unravelling. With the Conservative party indeed, as the following extract from what was virtually Naumann's manifesto, published last November, showed, they could work no longer:—

"Our care for the people has been genuine. We have seen its life, and heard its sighs. To the best of our poor strength we have endeavoured to make a Christ's kingdom of this earth—an endeavour which runs counter to the secret fancy of the Conservatives. . . . Now, open war! Have your own desire! On your side is more might, on ours more right; on yours more craft in intrigue and more party experience, on ours more

honourable enthusiasm. You stake more to lose, we more to win. You want to govern, we want to guide."

But to split with the Conservatives is not sufficient proof of the "Social-Democratising" with which the National Liberal organ charged them. To understand this, their programme and its incidence must be studied. The latest programme was published by Pastor Naumann in the *New-Year's* number of the 'Hilfe.' The first item on its list is to secure a working State Socialism. A point, it is said, must come, in the growing socialistic tendency of Germany, when the Government will find itself at a dead-lock, without a voting majority even for the necessary supplies. "What will the Imperial Hohenzollern dynasty do then?" Two courses will be open—either to suspend the Reichstag, an act of autocracy to which the Social Democrats look forward as the gauntlet of revolution, or else to conclude a treaty with Socialism. The latter alternative chosen will mark the turning-point of German history, the golden day when a mild and beneficent monarchy will exclaim with Emerson, "Feudalism and Orientalism have long enough held sway amongst us, —the modern Majesty consists in work!" We believe, continues Pastor Naumann—

"We believe that our Imperial power will grasp this duty, and fulfil it. But if it should not come to pass that the Imperial power of Germany renews the decrees of February 1890, and makes peace with Socialism, then the political work of the Christian Socialists will be to no purpose, but then too, so far as we can see, the future of national Germany will be

ruined, for we hold that a social public on German soil is impossible. An Emperor whose power does rest on a majority of his people is just as unstable as mob-rule without Emperor;"

and the five articles of political faith are given as follows:—

"1. We will protect our fatherland as the land of diligent labour.

"2. We will honour the Emperor because he will be Emperor of the industrial classes.

"3. We will support every reform that can assist labour in its battle against tribute and interest.

"4. We believe in the community of the interests of labour in town and country.

"5. We further every voluntary trades-union, be its name what may."

To us, on their own showing, the Socialism of the party seems weak. The tranquil transition from an absolute to a constitutional monarchy, which is implied in the euphemism of making a treaty with labour, is an impossible solution, and differs only from the party-cry of Social Democracy in being within the letter of the law while respect to the Emperor is made conditional by the justification alleged. The fifth article too, is significant, for it has been suggested, not perhaps without tinge of academic cynicism, that the persistent attack on the political front of Social Democracy the one-sided traducing of its political aims, is the simplest method of postponing the inconveniences of its economic agitation. The extensive formation of trades-unions among German workmen is a step which employers could with difficulty resist, however strongly they might resent it.¹ Their policy, then, would

¹ Trades-unions are of course not unknown, but manufacturers and employers discourage them as much as possible, mainly by forming an alliance among themselves to keep out of work such mill- or factory-hands as have been agitators, strikers, or members of a guild. This "black list" circulates through Germany

be to concentrate the indignation of the Social Democrats upon their political wrongs, without allowing their attention time to wander to their economic rights. It is a destructive policy, proceeding by repression, where the police are a visible force compelling to obedience and absorbing the resources of opposition. But in the other field, the field which Christian Socialism has taken over, if labour struck against capital and refused to work, the police would be practically powerless. The Emperor-King might conceivably turn despot; he could never turn slave-driver. A constructive agency would have to intervene, and concession take the place of repression. Hitherto, the Social Democrats have been kept busy elsewhere, and the President of the Police has played into the hands of the Conservative capitalists; but now, even on paper, "the enemies within the camp" are betrayed. The Socialism of the Church has approached the task where the Socialism of the Democrats scarcely courted failure—for no one moves so slowly as the country worker—of revolutionising rural industry and uniting the small tenant-farmers against the landlords. Its Christianity, as set forth in their programme, is as follows. Holding Evangelical Christianity to be the best possible religion, they are on the horns of this dilemma, that the multitude which is socialistic is not religious, while the few who are religious are not socialistic, the multitude being the Social Democratic town population, the few being the Christian Conservatives. How effect a solution? Pastor Naumann, like Cæsar in Gaul, divides his task under three heads. The first is to reconcile the old antagonists, faith with science;

the second, to assert responsibility and the freedom of the will; and the third is to preach the religion of humanity. If men would but learn that God and Mind, though not God and Mammon, can be served at once, the Socialists would become christianised and the Christians socialised. In this connection it is apposite to note that some minor members of the party have recently issued a book with the ambitious title, 'Studies in the History of the Moral and Social Development of Germany during the last Thirty-five Years,'¹ in which the third and fourth chapters treat of the influence of natural science on ethics and society, and the approaches through science to the "Evangelium." The whole volume is of interest, if only to prove the impossibility of writing contemporary history, for the perspective is naturally false: the evils of the age are exaggerated in compass, and are illogically referred to the forces which oppose them. Social Democracy looms large in every page, as the fruitful cause of irreligion, discontent, misery, and immorality, and like the burden of a song, the clerical authors always conclude with the crying need of faith. But as the chapter on the influence of modern art is the least convincing, the ingenuous writer finding himself driven to recommend a volume of his own verse as the safest reading, so these essays on science and religion, popularly speaking, are the most satisfactory. That evolution, pushed backwards, reaches an *impasse*, where its silence is the opportunity of belief; that man grows better in a decaying world, so that theologians are justified of their teleology; that the sense of beauty and love is not wholly accounted for by evolution,—these

¹ Edited by Licentiate Weber. Gütersloh, 1895.

are at least contributions towards the first of Pastor Naumann's tasks. So much might justly be conceded, but even here a deduction has to be made. On pp. 44, 45 of these 'Studies' we read:—

"The foregoing reflections carry with them a very heavy indictment. We wanted to investigate what influence the natural sciences had exercised upon the religious and ethical development of the life of the German people; and the sum of our inquiry is, that this influence has been highly detrimental. We saw that in the reign of machinery, springing from the applied natural sciences, the danger lurks of levelling the life of the people, robbing them of their ideal possessions, which make it bearable, peaceable, and worth the effort. We saw, further, that natural science applied to human life, so far as it has engaged speculation during the last few decades, has maintained a doctrine which is more and more permeating the people, and directly crushing and killing its religion and morality.

"What follows for all those who have the ethical wellbeing of our people at heart? Are we to pluck out this pestilent science, root and branch? Does not Christ say that we should cut off our right hand if it offends, rather than commit our whole body to hell? Therefore—Death to natural science, battle to the death with this offspring of hell!

"No; far from it. That way nothing is gained. The gifts of natural philosophy are also a boon from the Giver of all. But one thing is of chief importance. Darwinism, which is here almost exclusively concerned, is neither *the* nor *any* natural science, but only its misbegotten child. Therefore the cry is not, Death to Natural Science! but, Death to Darwinism!"

This extract, which is typical of the style of the book, is sufficient to show the kind of special pleading to which Christian Socialism is reduced in combating the movement towards *Vernunft*, or Reason, so characteristic of the Social Democrats. It is at once denunciatory and timid, and the stronger

party—stronger in numbers and stronger in logic—can afford to pass it over with a smile, while availing themselves of the labour agitation. And for the correlative task which Pastor Naumann has set himself, to bring home to professing Christians the claim of humanity on their charity and love; to convince them that politics, too, is religion, so far as the hungry and naked can be fed and clad at the public expense; to preach down the love of Mammon, for that a man cannot serve two masters,—here, likewise, much is left to be desired. There is nothing new in the campaign except his errors. To isolate texts from the Gospels is a dangerous experiment, and modern society has found a better use for wealth than its equal partition, or at least has recognised the impracticability of this, and would learn to make the best of the alternative. Ruskin, after all, hit the mark: "I do not say, Break the strong man's arms, but, Teach him to use his strength aright." The dead level of life, which we found Christian Socialists deploring as the result of a universalised modicum of knowledge, could but be aggravated by a similar dissipation of capital. The clergy should be the repairers of the breach, not the frustrators of immense potentialities for good. Moreover, these particular clergy, whether from the prejudice of their cloth or to popularise their preachments, have shifted their ground from anti-capitalism to anti-Semitism. Naumann himself, to his honour or his interest, branches off here; indeed his equivocal attitude towards this question was alleged at the Frankfurt Congress as a principal ground for disallowing him a partnership in true Christian Socialism. As one of Stöcker's clerical supporters candidly remarked at that gathering:—

"He [Naumann] seems to have no correct notion of the root of this matter, seeing he lays chief stress on the occasional exploitation of the economically weaker, which must be fought on the merits of the case. . . . The root lies deeper. We are fighting the operations of the new Jewish spirit, which is poisoning the people, —their devilish hate of Christ, their materialism, their sensuality, their *bourse*,¹ their literature, their press."

It is ungrateful, to say the least, because Moses, we know, was a State Socialist, whose legislation shaded into religion; and Isaiah's socialistic precepts might be displayed on the banners of the Labour Party; yet these lived before Christ, whose communistic kingdom it is desired to establish on earth. It is a poor compliment to a religion taking its stand on brotherly love and equality, that it demands for its inauguration the sacrifice of the survivors of its founder.

The anti-climax is notable, but true. Exhibited in working, this twofold movement towards the dignity of labour and Evangelical Christianity resolves itself into an anti-Semitic war:—

"In the spirit of Christian Socialism there declared itself Stöcker's heroic war against the Jews, to have begun which was to put the German people under an obligation to him which they can never forget."²

Their memory may well be shorter-lived. For not only are the Jews themselves, by agencies whose far-reaching extent can only be guessed at, undermining the calumnies of their detractors, but the schism in the Conservative party, and Stöcker's latest aspiration for a freer Church, independent of Byzantinism, are more than be-

ginning to cast into discredit the war-cries of the revolted clergy, and consequently to react in favour of the Jews. With so artificial an origin, the duration of the reaction is doubtful. Anti-Semitism on the Continent is sometimes said to be coextensive only with anti-capitalism. No plea on the part of the anti-Semites could be a more cowardly subterfuge; for were this the case, then "the heroic war against the Jews" would long since have been identified with the pestilential heresy of the Social Democrats. These, in the spirit of Karl Marx, a Jew, would lead a crusade against capital, as a social misgrowth; Stöcker and his new independent party, taking the name of the greatest Jew in vain, make war against Jews as a racial mistake. There is a real difference here, and it is the accident, so to speak, that, in Berlin, capital and the Jews are liable to popular confusion, which has enabled the Social Democrats to avail themselves of Christian Socialism for the furtherance of their own ends. Social Democracy is anti-capitalist, but not anti-Semitic; Christian Socialism proper would be anti-Semitic if capital were abolished to-morrow. Naumann's reversion, in this instance, to the Social Democratic attitude, is a logical rather than liberal distinction. At all times a popular cry, anti-Semitism was until quite recently acceptable to Conservative capitalists, and is only now regarded with suspicion for the doubtful repute of its supporters. For the Jewish question in Prussia is variously complicated by envy, prejudice, and ignorance, and a permanent element unfortunately remains in natural incom-

¹ It may be noted that the words *bourse* and *bankier* have both degenerated in meaning, and signify now "jobbery" and "jobber."

² Studies, &c., *supra*, p. 26.

patibility of temperament. The average Berliner has no sense of spending. The tradition of Lutheran asceticism survives in him still. The amusements of the rich being within reach of the poor, there has grown up in Berlin, as a capital city, a dislike of display, which has its bad side as well as its good. It may be remarked in the streets during the daytime, which never come near to the "smart" appearance of Piccadilly or the Boulevards. There are not many carriages and no "parade" of costume, and though the crowd is big enough, it is business-like for the most part, and without colour. The Jews, as a large part of the moneyed *parvenus*, oppose this tendency, as nature and common-sense dictate. Without vulgar ostentation, except that this quality is a comparative term, they spend the money which they acquire in all the paraphernalia of prosperity—equipages, dress, pictures, good living, and, as elsewhere, good works; the last, indeed, out of all proportion to their numbers or wealth. The difficulty is, that this very manifestation of worldly prosperity is with all its accompaniments distasteful to Berlin. It is notorious that the best shops and most successful businesses are run by Jews, and it is notorious, too, that the Jews were first in availing themselves of the advantages of education; but the nature of the average Berliner, half by inherited instinct, half by resulting Philistinism, is set against this wholesome circulation of money, and the consequent development of *Grossstädtlichkeit*. That Jews, therefore, mobilise capital is by no means the sum of their indictment. Their virtues as well as their vices are repugnant to the slow-moving German,—their

abstemiousness, for instance, the land of beer, and their comparative purity in the capital cheap immorality. A renegade anti-Semite, who has published pamphlet under the title of 'Behind the Scenes: My Exit from Anti-Semitism,'¹ Herr Wilhelm Georg, previously editor of sundry anti-Semitic journals, gives some instructive information out of his very intimate experience. He explains his defection on the ground that he entered the party as a young man, with a one-sided acquaintance with the question.

"Certainly," he writes, "I did not change in a night from Saul to Paul, nor have I sold my opinion, as some would like to believe. Nay, I still maintain to-day that a part of the anti-Semitic charges against Judaism are fully justified; but I steadfastly deny that the anti-Semitic parties and the demagogues who march at their head have the means or the right to interfere."

He makes a rough scheme of anti-Semitic Germany in four divisions, calling them respectively—

"1. The Idealists, who are anti-Semites from pure Idealism and the force of their convictions. Of these I know only a dozen.

"2. The Business anti-Semites. These are the majority, who from envy or malice or similar petty causes are jealous of their Jewish rivals against whom no language is too strong. If they had their way the Jewish question would be settled in twenty-four hours—i.e., no one should swindle the public but themselves.

"3. The Sport anti-Semites, who express their opinion in the beer-house, at open meetings, in the train and so forth, and cry it loudest if Jew happens their way.

"4. The Convention anti-Semites, people in so-called good society, who think it fashionable to repeat an occasional anti-Semitic *bon-mot*."

So much for the summary of the

¹ Hanover: Gebrüder Schmidt, 1895.

shrewd and repentant journalist, to set himself right, as he says, with those whom his speeches may have converted to anti-Semitism, and so much for the cause to which a section of the Christian Church has lent theegis of its protection, reinforced now with the somewhat tarnished fame of the ex-Court preacher, Stöcker. It is no wonder that this at once extravagant and reactionary party, who join the cry of Down with the Jews! to that of Death to Darwinism! in their quest of a millennium, should have been shaken off by the Conservatives. The irony of the situation is that—themselves and their offshoot—they play into the hands of the Social Democrats whom they went out to slay. With their virtual monarchical abdication and practical industrial revolution, what matters, it is asked, the wee bit of Christianity thrown in. And from the other point of view it is permissible to doubt whether policies of prejudice and hatred can be justified in His name, by whom all the peoples of the earth are blessed.

The schism in the Church—to deal more briefly with a feature of the second recent event of importance—has reacted upon authority, and considerable anxiety is felt in clerical quarters for the due religious education of children in primary schools. To one who followed the course of the debate on the first reading of the Teachers' Payment Bill in the Landtag, the prominence of this question was obvious. Shortly stated, the object of this measure is to assist the rural communities at the expense of the towns—the State, that is, applying the money which it saves in the cities to the relief of the village schools. The bill is introduced by Dr Bosse, the Minister of Education, who called it the child of his heart. His Ex-

cellency claimed that the time is not yet ripe for a complete schools' reform.

"I am no enemy," he said, "of a Schools Bill, and should in fact welcome a good one resting upon Christian principles. I am even ready to waive my opinions and join in such a work; but I hold it to be more expedient not at this hour to enter upon this great campaign, for who after all would it be that would stand by and laugh and rub their hands?—Social Democracy."

Here, at any rate, is a Ministerial confession of timidity before the Social Democrats, strong enough to postpone necessary legislation to the fear that they would be the chief gainers by it. Of the particular measure itself, now in Commission, which Dr Bosse evidently hopes to push through without running this risk, the following extract from his opening speech will sufficiently indicate its character:—

"If we were to suppose the whole outlay for public schools covered by additions to the income-tax, we should get the most certain standard of the capacity of payment. Now the outlay came to a round sum of 170 millions of marks—i.e., 139 per cent of the income-tax. Of this, 75 millions fall on the towns, 95 on the villages. In Wiesbaden, e.g., the school-costs amount to 38 per cent of the income-tax in the towns, and in the villages to 477 per cent. This is a proof that the towns have hitherto not borne what they should have borne, or at least have borne less than the villages, and that the big towns have been to some extent in receipt of grants, to which, according to the standard of their capacity of payment, they have no claim. Now, we are not going to take this away: we are going to leave it them, or at least we are going to leave them something; but the whole amount we cannot any longer leave them, for this reason, that between the Act, in virtue of which they have automatically received a specified sum at every teacher's appointment, without ques-

tion whether the community is capable of payment or not,—between that Act and to-day lies the entire Taxation Reform. Therefore we must change all this."

The bill, as has been remarked, is in Commission, and its details need not now detain us. Its principle is that a rich city commonalty, which has the enterprise to call for new schools, should also bear the whole additional cost of the teaching staff, as it already bears the principal cost of equipment. In other words, there is to be a fixed maximum of teachers subsidised by the State in each district,—for under the present system of automatic increase in its educational expenditure, the State never sees the end of its liabilities, and State moneys having a strong attraction towards the army and defences, Dr Bosse has begged in vain for the relief of his discontented department. The village schoolmasters are certainly much to be pitied. Badly housed and underpaid, they no doubt lend a ready ear to the enemies of the State, whether these come howling as Social Democrats or bleating as Christian Socialists. In this connection, it may be noticed, as indicating possibly similar factors operating in Austria, that among the promises of Dr Lueger, the abortive Burgomaster of Vienna, was an increase in teachers' salaries. And besides this, the Prussian schoolmaster in the country is miserably understaffed. The principle is that, in towns, the proportion of masters to pupils shall be not less than 1 to 70, and in rural districts 1 to 80. But it frequently happens in practice that the proportion is no more than 1 to 100 or 110, which means that a single teacher has to do the whole school-work at once, instructing in different standards at one and the same time the three

age-divisions, upper, middle, and lower, of an unruly village school. Under these circumstances, it might have been thought that Dr Bosse's palliative, failing the occasion for a complete school-reform, would be acceptable on all sides excepting, perhaps, that of the municipalities touched in the pockets. As a matter of fact, the Commission now sitting has already received a huge deputation from sixty such Prussian towns. But, as has been indicated above, the chief opposition on the floor of the House came from the Centrum, the Roman Catholic party with its sensitive religious conscience. The recent events in the religious world, the adaptation of Christian doctrine to revolutionary ends, has created here a profound distrust of the religious teaching imparted in the schools, or at least a strong resolve to preserve their discretionary right in the selection of teachers. It is natural that the impact of Social Democracy, originally at any rate an intellectual movement, should be especially visible in the field of education. The teaching in the primary and secondary schools, the tendency of the university and even the more evasive factor of the trend of thought, emancipated from scholastic discipline to form a school for itself, and purified by the chemistry of philosophic abstraction,—in all these departments it is possible to trace its influence; and its opposition to established authority centres about the old, bitter religious question in the board schools. Social Democratic parents, obviously enough, object to the impregnation of their children with the dogmatic theology whose revelation they have rejected. They have published protests and pamphlets in abundance, notably one with the title, taken from Goethe

of 'Menschenopfer unerhört,'¹ in which they set forth their case, claiming the same right, as parents, which is enjoyed by the rest of their fellow-countrymen, and giving in sober language the basis of their atheistic conclusions. A single extract from the Leipsic pamphlet will be of interest here, in connection with the recent detention of Dr Förster, the editor of 'Ethische Kultur,' which was mentioned above:—

"Read the publications of the German Society for ethical culture, and review the results which have sprung from it, and you cannot but exclaim, Here, too, is religion! As German teachers, do not despise our national literature. We have fables of matchless affection, heroic tales of marvelous force, most moving narratives, a stirring and stimulating history, and the sublime consolations of poetry. . . . Let Churches and sects quarrel about questions of belief; do you hold fast to the certainty of conduct."

This right, or the claim to it, taking their stand upon the general principle that dogmatic *religious* teaching in the confession of its parents is obligatory on every child, the Prussian Government sees fit to ignore, and forces, therefore, these children to partake of such instruction, leaving to the parents, with somewhat grim irony, the choice of the particular creed. Though this privilege is doubtless exercised in a spirit of contempt, so that the small son of a renegade Christian may be found as a disturbing element in a Jewish class, yet the Procrustean system can count this much of success, that the number of "Dissidents" fell, in the primary schools of Berlin, from 625 in 1893 to 508 at the end of 1894. But the fact remains that, with discontent among the teachers and parents, with a

dwindling exchequer and growing difficulties, Dr Bosse, however reactionary he may be, is likely to be closely watched by the keepers of his clerical conscience. Until the whole school system is put on a footing of reform, they will exhibit considerable reluctance to intrust more to his initiative. This vague feeling of alarm at the disquiet in the air found expression in the speech of Freiherr von Heereman, on January 31 last, the second day of the debate on the Minister's bill. Admitting the full title of the teachers to all the assistance which he and his party could give them, he went on to say:—

"The piecemeal management of legislation leaves much to be desired. If the *Cultus Ministerium* had the energy and the will, we could at this moment pass an excellent Schools' Bill—at this moment or not at all. Nothing is more necessary than this for the natural course of our prosperity. With a bill such as that before us I ask, Where are the rights of the commonalties, the parents, the Church? Constitutionally, the State shares its school right with the people; the teachers are appointed by both. But in some districts the commonalty is not allowed to choose the man they want; they are only allowed to pay. It is an unjust arrangement for which we are asked to legislate. The school and the people must stand by one another. . . . If parents are obliged to send their children to schools of which they conscientiously disapprove, is this not tyranny? . . . It is the utterance of a liberal man,—We are not required to sacrifice goods to the State which are worth more than the State. If the Church is denied her right of educating children to a religious life, . . . how combat revolution? Do you fancy it can be done by the police? It is far too widespread and seductive. Social Democracy can only be successfully fought by bringing up the new generation in a Christian way, and giving them thus a per-

¹ By Kuno Faust. Leipsic, 1895.

manent moral safeguard. The other way destruction lies, and the victory of Social Democracy. . . . What this bill demands is, that we vote pensions to teachers without knowing who appoints such teachers. This is a journey in the dark which I for one refuse to take, for the confidence which was given to the then Education Department cannot be placed in its representatives to-day."

Dr Bosse's reply came as a surprise to the National Liberals and others, who expected his Excellency energetically to disclaim the doubts virtually cast on his good faith. The authority of the State was certainly not upheld by him with that inaccessible *ne plus ultra* which commonly characterises its actions. He was deeply sensible of Freiherr von Heereman's excellent intentions. He deplored that he should regard the relief of rural communities from their burden of responsibility as a practical transition from the theory of national schools to the reality of State training establishments:—

"We have no such thing as a State school. Our school system is above all national, under State supervision. We avail ourselves largely of the assistance of the Church and her organs. We require her. . . . I hope that I have said no word to wound Herr von Heereman. I have the highest regard for him, as has the whole House; but it hurts me to be attacked in this way. And if this comes from Herr von Heereman, whom we all know to be a gentleman—if this happens in the green, what will it be in the dry?"

The child of his Excellency's heart, to use his own description, will not be still-born for want of parental sacrifice.

Social Democracy, to end where we began, blocks the way, and until some method is devised of honestly grappling with its substance, its shadow will be over the land. We have seen how it first disorganised, and is now swallowing, the Church; how the old Church party, in bitter reaction, is making the path of constitutional reform more thorny to tread by its almost pedantic timidity before the enemy. The day of reckoning must come,—there is hardly a German politician who does not recognise this; whether it will also be a day of blood, whether Berlin, too, will arm a Cromwell or fire a Bastille, is a question better left unattempted. Party feeling runs more highly here than in most European countries; it permeates the social life of the capital, which follows political rather than class distinctions; and within the parties there is nothing of that spirit of "mutuality" which solves the insoluble by compromise. Yet, when the failure of the police is completed, if timely concessions were made to the cry for liberty, and the sins of Social Democracy were blotted out in the sane realisation of their better aspirations, the Emperor might mould the great destinies of his country to his own patriotic ends, with the love and loyalty of all his people. For that it is a great people despite its littlenesses, a residence in the land must discover. It is a people with huge reserves of patience and strength, with youth and with traditions, secure of a prosperous future when this crucial period of its history is past.

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THERE are four main aspects of South African affairs which, amidst innumerable jarring interests and the countless arguments of what may be termed political specialists, have to be considered. First, there is the *Race question* between the Dutch and British settlers, which runs through all the colonies and settlements; secondly, the *Railway question*, which arouses even deeper feelings than any race problem; thirdly, the *Native question*, which was the most important a few years ago, but is now reduced to a completely subsidiary condition, as far as rule and dominion are concerned, yet second to none in its moral significance; fourthly, the position of the *Imperial Factor*, a much-maligned and much misunderstood phrase in South African politics. It is hardly worth while to discuss German policy in South Africa, as it will never be allowed to exist as a governing policy

either by the Imperial Government or by the South African colonists themselves. It would mean a German command of the sea outside South Africa, and a bureaucratic rule inside, the latter being a violent contrast to the whole modern theory of free colonial development, with free institutions and a popular Government. It is hardly likely that the Cape colonists who disputed so warmly and vigorously at an early date with the mother country, in the days of the Administration of Earl Grey, on the subject of the importation of convicts, and, later on, did battle for the freedom of the press, would fall in with a German hegemony and consent to be crushed out by the heel of the jack-boot. With regard to the Dutch element and the descendants of the French Huguenots, there is no likelihood, to use the phrase of the late Sir Bartle Frere, that

they would prefer even the "little finger" of German bureaucracy to the "loins" of British administration.

1. *The Race Question.*—Owing to a deficiency of statistics, it is almost impossible to discover the actual proportion of Dutch and British-born colonists in the Cape Colony, Natal, the Free State, and the South African Republic—at any rate, with any degree of accuracy. Nor is it easy to find out amongst the Boers themselves how much of their blood comes from the Netherlands, how much from France, and how much from other sources. Originally the British found in 1806, the date of the permanent British occupation of the Cape, two main streams—viz., the descendants of the old Dutch servants and employes of the Netherlands East India Company, who, in the days of that extremely exclusive and autocratic trading monopoly, were allowed by favour and by grace to open small shops and to supply passing ships with vegetables. These can hardly be termed free colonists in the sense of our Pennsylvanian emigrants, as they were subservient, to a most ridiculous extent, to the caprices of the directors and merchant princes of Holland. Judge Watermeyer, of Cape celebrity, has in a series of most instructive essays shown up the absurd pomp and etiquette of the Netherlands Chartered East India Company; and he sums up the situation extremely well by saying that the British occupation of the Cape inaugurated a new period of colonial prosperity and colonial freedom, which had been cruelly checked by the harsh monopolists who had their headquarters in the Castle at Capetown.

The second stream of immigrants

was that of the various Protestant refugees who, after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, were compelled about two hundred years ago to find new homes for themselves outside Europe. There is no doubt that this was a more honourable influx than that of the time-expired servants of the old company, and although they numbered only 300 at first, their descendants spread largely over the country. They were first located at Stellenbosch, Drakenstein, Fransche Hoek, and the Paarl, but their language was forbidden to be used officially, and soon died out under Dutch repression. Also, in matters of religion and in forms of religious services they were subject to several prohibitory if not persecuting measures.

The most notable colonisation scheme ever carried out in South Africa was that of the Scotch and English settlers at Algoa Bay in 1819, which formed the district of Albany, and laid the foundation of the Eastern Province of the Cape Colony. Later on in the fifties the disbanded veterans of the German Legion were placed after the Crimean war in the Eastern Province, and contributed to build up the prosperity of King William's Town. Here, then, are the chief nuclei of the South African population—Dutch, French, English, Scotch, and German—and for nearly a hundred years these elements have been working alongside one another within the borders of the "Old Colony," as the Cape Colony is called, and are inextricably mixed up by intermarriage. Revisers of the census summaries will tell us that the Dutch or French names exceed all others by a good deal, and certainly comprise more than half of the population. They are found chiefly in the pastoral and agricultural dis-

tricts, whilst the English and Scotch congregate more in towns. The diamond mines of Kimberley were the means, of course, of introducing a motley crew of migratory habits from every country under the sun, but their presence has not affected very largely the real character of the South African population.

The great Boer trek of nearly fifty years ago, by which the Transvaal was founded in 1852, and the Orange Free State in 1854, introduced a new phase of the Race question. It was a protest, in the first instance, against British rule, and resulted in the establishment of two separate communities, but it broke up the homogeneity of the Dutch and Huguenot element. The mere fact of distance militated against their being kept in constant touch and sympathy with one another. Even in the Cape Colony itself there are many grades of society amongst the Dutch and French themselves. The older, wealthier, and more aristocratic families who live around Capetown and the vicinity are removed by a whole world of education and ideas from the uncouth corn-boer of the Malmesbury district or the tobacco-grower of George or Oudtshoorn. To say that, for the sake of sentiment, a Paarl *vigneron* or a Karroo sheep-farmer will shoulder his rifle and leave his flocks and herds to fight for the Transvaal, thereby imperilling his all in the chances of war, is to exaggerate and distort the Race question in South Africa. Indeed it may surprise us to learn that amongst Jameson's troopers there were several men bearing old Dutch and French colonial names. The Transvaal Government has no great love for the brethren of the Cape Colony, and classes them all as "Uitlanders."

Again, the "mean whites," who are poor and degraded colonists, chiefly of Dutch extraction, and bearing Dutch names, who cannot compete with the skilful artisan imported from Europe, or labour cheek-by-jowl with Kaffirs and Hottentots in the hard work of the field or mine, constitute a largely increasing class in the Old Colony and elsewhere. The half-castes are also more numerous in South Africa than most people suppose, but it is difficult to count them as factors in the race problem.

The Boer is naturally an isolated individual, and hates the slightest burden of restraint. He has not gone into the wilderness for conscience' sake, but mainly and primarily because he loved the life of a nomad, and also because he objected to English interference with slavery. Indeed it is true to call him an extremely selfish nomad, hating the sight of his neighbour's beacon, and a well-known enemy to the slightest obligation in the shape of a tax. Here and there an old Boer patriarch, called by such a name as Niekerk, Vanart, or Du Plessis, will appropriate a whole river valley, fill it with his descendants, and form a kind of clan. But he does not rise really to clan organisation; his property is subdivided by the Dutch-Roman law of inheritance, the numerous progeny quarrel bitterly amongst themselves, and frequently intermarry, with the worst possible physical results. To compare any known Boer community to a Swiss canton in its orderly and self-sacrificing government is to misread the truth of affairs altogether, and to call up an utterly false analogy.

As another glaring instance of the want of Boer homogeneity, we may bring forward the numerous "treks" and foundings of mock

republics in South Africa. All these are really signs of the inherent lawlessness of the Boer mind, which is framed rather after the style of the Cyclopes of old than of nineteenth-century colonists. Immediately the Transvaal, a country as large as France, with enormous resources, was given back to about 60,000 Boers, we hear of parties of them setting up the "New Republic" at Vryheid in Zululand, Goshen and Stellaland in Bechuanaland on the west, also of various treks across the Kalihari to Mossamedes, and wherever else they could turn with impunity. President Kruger was compelled, as we know, to damp down a contemplated trek to Mashonaland and the north. When the British took possession of the Cape in 1806, they found a revolutionary Dutch party in power at Graaf Reinet defying the central authority at Capetown.

The history of the Transvaal itself is a striking instance of the lack of unanimity amongst Boer leaders, whose ambitions tend towards political decentralisation and a feeble insularity. Not long ago there were three small republics across the Vaal,—one at Magaliesberg, a second at Lydenburg, and a third at Zoutpansberg. In 1864 Paul Kruger had to fight a large body of secessionists; and if there is any political solidarity in the Transvaal at the present moment, it has been achieved not by mere race sentiment, but by a series of accidental circumstances with which mere race considerations have little or nothing to do. Nor can the so-called race feeling of the descendants of the Dutch and French settlers of two hundred years ago be recruited now from Europe. The "Hollander" immigration is of a completely fictitious character, and the old Dutch Boers

have always had far more in common with such settlers as the Scotch than with the Hollanders. It was a Scotchman, Fraser by name, whose election as President of the Free State seemed almost certain a short time ago, before the recent crisis in the Transvaal.

Had it not been for the discipline of the Dutch Reformed Church, the Boers of South Africa would scarcely have differed at all from the nomads who wander on the steppes of Tartary. Their Church and the celebration of the *Nachtmaal* have served as a pivot round which the rustic Boers have rallied, and so far their State and Church can be said to have gone together in a kind of loose fashion. But even this Church has become honeycombed with dissent, chiefly owing to the inelastic and intolerant nature of some of its dogmas, and more than once, at their Church Synods, the "Liberals" have been in open revolt. On the other hand, the Doppe Church has remained apart as a section by itself.

Nor has the race feeling been fostered or expressed by any kind of literature. There is scarcely a book, pamphlet, national song, or even a picturesque tradition, to enliven the annals of the South African Boer. Boer enthusiasts point to the "Afrikander Bond," but, examined in a true light, this is simply an electioneering agency carried on by a few wire-pullers upon very narrow lines. Very often their discussions turn upon the "Scab Act" and the "Brandy tax," the Boer resenting the first-named Act, if it involves the inspection and destruction of diseased animals. His ambition in the political world is to shift every tax and every responsibility he can upon others, and to vote for purely class legislation. Indeed the "Afrikander Bond" is not

the expression for any kind of race organisation,—it is simply a farmers' league for protective measures, and it includes all African-born people of every nationality. Outsiders may be deceived by the name and all the paraphernalia of a Land League, but there is no real patriotism at the bottom of the "Afrikander Bond."

To sum up, there cannot be said to be a European Race question, in the usual sense of the term, in the colonies and communities of South Africa. In the Transvaal it is more a *Constitutional* question than anything else, and if the Imperial Government insist on rights to the "Uitlanders," they are actually taking the side of all colonists, whether Dutch, French, German, or English, who live in cis-Vaal river districts. They are helping the younger sons of Malmesbury corn-growers, Stellenbosch *vignerons*, and enterprising scions of the "Old Colony" stock, or indeed of the Natal Boers, against a narrow and bigoted oligarchy in the Transvaal. Whatever happens between the Imperial Government and the South African Republic in the solution of present problems, the former must command the sympathy of a large majority of South African colonists in the Cape Colony and Natal, if they are bold enough to insist on equal political privileges for the working "Uitlander" and absolute freedom of the press. Numerically it has been pointed out, again and again, that the British element must forge ahead in South Africa. President Kruger may hire German mercenaries or he may favour "Hollander" concessionaires and monopolists, and even carry on a diplomatic flirtation with the Orange Free State; but he stands in a wrong position if he appeals to race animosities when he is

breaking every rule and tradition of free colonisation. Wider principles of political economy, and more liberal ideas of free colonisation for all, must override the narrow and illogical behests of any race question in South Africa.

2. *The Railway Question.*—Although many people in Europe have not realised it, there has been going on for some years past in South Africa a stern and often bitter war—not of creeds or classes, but of Railways and Routes. This war has had a most marked effect upon parties and politics in the Cape Colony, Natal, and the two Boer Republics. The objective of a railway policy has been in all cases the gold-fields of the Rand. As a glance at the map will show, there are three main routes to the Transvaal: one *viâ* Capetown and the Cape Railways; a second *viâ* Port Natal and the Durban-Charlestown line; a third *viâ* Delagoa Bay and Portuguese territory, and so along the Netherlands Railway—Paul Kruger's pet creation. Of these routes, that by Table Bay, whilst it avoids the storms of Cape Agulhas and the rough waters of the south coast, involves by far the longest railway journey after disembarkation, that by Delagoa the shortest. It is 396 miles by rail between Delagoa Bay and Johannesburg, and 1013 miles by rail between Capetown and Johannesburg. Whatever passengers may do in the matter of choosing railway routes, it is clear that for goods traffic, in these days of cheap water-transit, Delagoa Bay must in the long-run, when good management has succeeded to bad, be preferred from economical reasons alone to Table Bay. As the merchants of Venice were forced to whistle in idleness on the historic quays of the Adriatic, when their

command of the Eastern trade-route had disappeared after the successful voyages of Diaz and Vasco da Gama, so may it be with the merchants of Capetown. They must cease to be the forwarding agents of the bulk of the South African trade, and they must be supplanted by their rivals of Natal and of Delagoa Bay. Geography is against them as well as the stern facts of economy, for a railway can hardly compete mile per mile with a steamer. Still the Cape has made a tremendous fight in order to hold the first place in this race for the north. To gain her object she has been on her knees, metaphorically speaking, to the Free State first of all, and then to the South African Republic.

All Boers were, in the first instance, opposed to railway extensions, as it meant opening the door to Uitlanders and disturbing their monopoly. But somehow or other the Boer has been coaxed and wheedled into acquiescence. Sir James Sivewright has been a tolerably successful intermediary in all the delicate railway negotiations, and so far must be congratulated on his Scotch adroitness. Natalians also have followed suit in paying court to the Boers in order to get their through communication to Johannesburg and Pretoria *via* Newcastle, and Paul Kruger has been in the delightful position of arbiter and judge of the whole railway situation. Had he and the executive of the Free State so wished it, they might have damped down railway extension at the very first, and so kept their country to themselves. But both the Orange Free State and the South African Republic had something very substantial to gain through Cape Colony, and so railways and telegraphs became a basis

of negotiation. It was by this means also that the High Commissioner and Great Britain might be squeezed, and occasional "unconsidered trifles" in the shape of outlying territories in Zululand and perhaps Swaziland, be snapped up, and also certain obnoxious clauses in Conventions modified and changed. At the same time money flowed into impoverished exchequers, and money, as crafty Kruger now begins to show us constitutes the sinews of war. That the Cape Colony sacrifices everything for railways and northward extension is a matter of history; and that this policy is remunerative, so far anyhow, is amply proved by the fact that, in 1895, the railways, which are Government property, paid more than 7 per cent. In the eyes of the Cape colonists the prospect also, of a still more remote objective than Johannesburg has constantly been alluring them on. Beyond Mafeking lies the road to Tati, to Bulawayo, to Mashonaland, and Rhodesia generally. The railway extension seemed to clinch their right and their prerogative to be the sole governing power in these glittering and remote provinces. There was a glamour over the whole of this great continental scheme, and a master mind gave to it all the colour of a rich imagination. The Cape seemed likely to monopolise everything. But a rude awakening came when, not long ago, Paul Kruger closed the Vaal river drifts, and waggons innumerable stood idle. Here was an undignified, if not ridiculous termination to ambitious railway schemes, for which the ruling party at Capetown had sacrificed so much. It was vexing and irritating. Kruger, however, knew what he was doing, and had been developing his own pet railway

worked by Netherlanders, from Delagoa Bay. Natal also was in the field, being distant only 434 miles from Johannesburg, and at one time seemed the favoured suitor, and she has the facts of geography in her favour. It was only by a somewhat peremptory message from Mr Chamberlain that the drifts were declared open; but there are many other ways of official and other delays, and Kruger can really encourage whom he will. It is a somewhat grotesque position this—the rude Boer commandant of former days holding at bay all the progress of a great colony, and making it feel absolutely dependent upon himself. He has treated the whole position in a diplomatically selfish way, and has made the best use of his pawns. The advocate of railways always maintained that if once a network of them were called into existence, racial differences would disappear, and all the various States and communities of South Africa would be on the highroad towards a Federal Union; but these political economists have made a mistake on this occasion, for the railways of South Africa have set all the various States by the ears in their quarrels for precedence. The battle of “Rates and Routes” is not over yet, and probably arouses in the Government departments, no less than in the mercantile circles, the keenest possible jealousies. For both of them are touched in the breeches-pockets—a proverbially tender place—the railways being, as above stated, a Government property, to create which vast loans are raised with annual interest to pay.

To Canada the Pacific Railway was a master-stroke of policy, chiefly for this reason, that it followed upon, and was regarded

as the natural sequel of, the Confederation Act of 1867; but in South Africa the numerous railways (and in numbers there is no strength) have accentuated political differences, and widened even social gaps. With the withdrawal of Mr Cecil Rhodes from the Cape, and the formation of a Sprigg Cabinet, we may witness some modification of the Cape Railway policy. On previous occasions Sir Gordon Sprigg has expressed his belief in purely colonial extensions and lateral amplifications of existing lines within the borders of the Cape Colony. This seems, for the time anyhow, a wiser and sounder programme. The agricultural conditions of the Cape Colony, which has the sorry boast of producing the dearest loaf in the world, are not very flourishing, and everywhere improvements can be made.

It may be asked, Why has the Cape Colony displayed such a feverish haste to rush northwards, develop railways, and annex provinces? and for an answer we must look into the economical conditions of the colony. Intrinsically they are good, and there are many paying industries in the country, but they are in a semi-developed state. Huge areas of land adapted to the growth of corn and wine lie as a desert waste, whilst the unprogressive Boer lounges about his *stoep* sipping his coffee and smoking his tobacco. The vast sums of money made in the Eldorados of Kimberley and Johannesburg do not permeate the country districts of the Cape, but go straight into the pockets of financiers and capitalists in London, Paris, and Berlin. As it was a very paying thing for the individual “transport-rider” or “kurveyor” to convey goods to and from Kimberley in the old

days, so now it has been a very lucrative thing for the State to become the "transport-riders" by railway for the big mining centres; but somehow or other their prosperity ends here. It is not a noble and permanently grand function to be simply a community of carriers, who have borrowed largely in the public market to set themselves up in their running stock. Somehow or other the railways of the Cape have not brought the returns they ought to have in the way of opening up on a sound basis the pastoral and other resources of the Cape Colony itself. In other colonies, as in Canada, free allotments and schemes of systematic colonisation have followed in the wake of railway extension. In this way large parts of Manitoba, Assiniboine, and the North-West Provinces have been developed, greatly to the advantage of the Canadian Dominion; but in the Cape Colony the objective has been a point far distant to the northwards, lying outside the boundaries of the Cape Colony itself. The whole debt of the Colony is about £26,000,000, and out of this nearly £20,000,000 has been borrowed for railways alone. If these railways cease to earn a fair percentage, and the competition *via* Delagoa Bay and Port Natal becomes excessive (and there is a point where land transit must cease to be profitable), the financial outlook of the Cape Colony must assume less rosy aspects than at present. In 1893 the exports of the Cape Colony were £13,638,749; but if we analyse the headings of produce that make up this sum, diamonds account for £3,739,908, and gold (a Transvaal product, it must be remembered, and only shipped through the Cape ports), £6,508,905. Wool only amounted in value to £1,855,016,

and this should be, as in Australia, the main permanent industry. The Cape colonists have therefore achieved a great work in railway construction in South Africa, but they have sacrificed a deal to effect this, and have neglected their own internal resources; whilst the railway policy, viewing it from a statesman's point of view, has to a vast extent vitiated and impaired political life.

It may be easily understood what consternation was caused in the Cape Colony when President Kruger closed the "Drift" traffic. By a momentary flash it appeared how completely the value of the distant objective of Transvaal trade could be depreciated. If Delagoa Bay became a free port the consternation would be followed by a great financial loss. Rebate can be trusted to as a source of profit only as long as it suits both parties to agree upon them. Railway conferences are useful upon occasions; but the conclusion drawn therefrom rest upon no especially binding international principle, and must always be subject to alteration and modification. The considerations that arise from a Cape railway policy follow also in a less degree, upon a Natal programme. Both colonies have given hostages to fortune in the shape of railway construction. If the Transvaal stands sullenly aloof and develops the Delagoa Bay route, the loss is theirs, and will have to be borne by both.

Financially, the only way out of the railway difficulty is a political confederation of all the South African States, with, amongst other important matters, a common agreement on rates and the levying of customs at the ports. Indeed such a consummation has become an actual life-necessity for the Cape Colony. Not even the

incorporation of British Bechuana-land or the fee-simple of Rhodesia and the north is of much avail to the colony if her railways, as her one great paying investment, cease to exist. For a railway policy that has practically mortgaged the resources of the State is more imperious than any race problem between the Boers and British, which has been shown to be vague and indeterminate in its aspects, and certainly does not demand the payment of half-yearly dividends to the holders of loans.

3. *The Native Question.*—Since the breaking up of the Zulu and Matabele powers the Native question, once so formidable in South Africa, and still perhaps likely to give occasional trouble, has ceased to be an anxiety to Colonial or Imperial statesmen. Even in Gazaland the feeble Portuguese Government has been able to deal successfully with Gungunhama, and south-east Africa is practically freed altogether from the curse of the descendants of Mosilikatse, the *quondam* Attila of this part of the world. Yet this result has not been gained without a terrible expenditure. To say nothing of the more recent wars with Oetewayo and Krelî, the Home Government was throwing millions of money broadcast over South Africa in the fifties. Sir William Molesworth once stated in Parliament (July 31, 1885) that our military expenditure at the Cape then amounted to £400,000 or £500,000 per annum as a standing dish, whereas the least Kaffir outbreak immediately sent the bill up to £1,000,000 per annum. Besides being costly, the five or six Kaffir campaigns of this century have been extremely vexatious and inglorious, from the high military point of view. The foe was always

insidious and crafty, and it was never easy to clear the valleys of the Kei and Fish rivers, or to sweep through the Amatolas. But it was work that had to be done on the confines of our gradually growing empire, and it was generally done well. At the same time it had to be done as carefully as possible, for the philanthropic party at home was always on the look-out for atrocities, and, in the case of the Glenelg policy, worked round an absolutely unwise reversal. The Boers also, with their sharp and rough methods, were always a puzzling and disturbing factor. Exeter Hall was, doubtless, always humane and philanthropic, but not invariably wise; and a whole chapter might be written on the intrusion of sentimental philanthropy upon the sphere of practical politics. Sometimes, in the Cape Colony itself, philanthropy was brandished about as a mere weapon of party politics in such a way as to deceive warm-hearted Britons at home, and to gull even the officials themselves.

However, the upshot of a most varied chapter of colonisation is this, that, owing to the advantages we hold of quick communication by rail, of modern artillery, and of all the resources of civilisation, we now behold native Africa pacified. Some of the native tribes, as those of Basutoland, and notably of Bechuana-land under chief Khama, survive with a territory of their own and a kind of tribal organisation of their own. Others, such as those in the Transkei, are being absorbed, ethnically and territorially, into the white colonists' domains. The Glen Grey Act, which breaks up gradually even the communal idea of the Reserves and Locations, is a step in the direction of a policy which forces upon the individual

Kaffir the value of his right arm in the labour markets of South Africa. For, everywhere in the native Reserves, we are faced with the question of over-population—the Kaffirs, unlike other aborigines, increasing rapidly under British protection. For the present the problem of native administration has been relegated to the background in South Africa; but as it is so intimately connected with the labour question, and this labour question is at the bottom of all economics, it must recur. Quite recently the scare in the Transvaal was sufficient to frighten the sensitive labour-market of Johannesburg, and mines were shut down. The lines of two broad policies dimly appear in the whole of this native question in South Africa: one is, to destroy the native ethnically, and to blot out the clan system, and eventually to make the Reserves and Locations colonial farms, the natives remaining to supply the labour-market as *ascripti glebæ*; the other is, to preserve the native in certain well-known regions and areas under white supervision, as in Basutoland and perhaps parts of Zululand and Pondoland, making them pay for their own government by hut-tax, and regarding the territories themselves as labour reservoirs which may be tapped judiciously by co-operation with the headmen and chiefs. The chief Khama, for instance, would be a most able intermediary to help both Europeans and his own subjects by the contracts of some rough sort of Labour Bureau. However, this Native question has only to be mentioned to suggest to the South African legislator an infinity of troublous rules and regulations. With regard to the feelings of the natives themselves, it may be almost taken for granted that they

look up to Great Britain as the paramount and ruling power in South Africa, and it was with this conviction, and in order to keep his territory safe from colonial absorption, that Khama undertook his mission to England. It is true that politically the paramount Power has in the eyes of the natives received several rebuffs: they know and realise the meaning of the Transvaal defeats and the Transvaal retrocession of fifteen years ago; they are aware, through bitter experience, that an Englishman's plighted word is *not* now as good as his bond; they feel that there is a great change somewhere, and that the High Commissioner, acting for the great mother across the seas, cannot always stand sponsor for their safety,—still they trust dimly on. The native mind loves naturally "one chief and one word," and is puzzled by the perplexities of colonial constitutional Governments—it prays to be delivered from land-grabbers and concessionaires. In the mixed condition of South African affairs there can be only one referee, the Imperial Government. Not that the colonial rule in such places as the Transkei is not just and fair, for it is so, and the way the Cape Colony has taken up the educationist rôle is admirable; but in the presence of the several forms of Governments which South Africa affords, the natives must have a choice, and if they vote for the Imperial Factor we cannot blame them. No longer does the Imperial Factor wish to stand in the way of wise colonial efforts at native administration—rather would Great Britain, as a transient trustee of a future South African Dominion, shake her hands free of it altogether; but this obligation is inherited, and it cannot be divorced from her just yet.

To sum up, this Native question is no longer a matter of departmental friction between the Colonial Office in London and colonists in South Africa, whether Boer or British, nor does it exacerbate race feeling, the time having gone by for this; but it is simply a remnant of Imperial obligations, which gives Great Britain a foothold in Basutoland, in Zululand, in Tongaland, in Swaziland if all has not been lost here, and also in the broad regions of Bechuanaland, Matabeleland, and Mashonaland, and so to the farthest fountains of the Zambesi. The inter-State quarrels do not turn upon this question now, and it cannot create one-tenth of the interest which the battle of the Rates and Routes does; but it cannot be neglected for long, or relegated to the background of politics, as it has been in North America, Australia, and New Zealand.

4. *The Imperial Factor.*—About ten years ago, and during the time of the Bechuanaland expedition under Sir Charles Warren, a good deal was said throughout South Africa, not always in a flattering way, about the "Imperial Factor." Great Britain had appeared to have turned her back in a cold fit upon South Africa altogether. Extraordinary as it seems to say it, there were few colonists, even of English birth, who thought that Great Britain could ever be galvanised into activity. In 1883-85 the subject turned chiefly upon the future of Bechuanaland, and a very instructive work called 'Austral Africa, Losing it or Ruling it,' was written by Mr John Mackenzie, who was appointed Deputy Commissioner for a country in which he had large experience of missionary work. Portions of it are well

worth reading again now, as the absolute feebleness of the High Commissioner, Sir Hercules Robinson, in managing a difficult question is abundantly shown up, and light is thrown upon the workings of party politics at Capetown itself. In a paper read before the Fellows of the Royal Colonial Institute (November 1885), called "Our Portion in South Africa," Sir Charles Warren, just home from South Africa, practically supported the general views taken by Mr Mackenzie. This sample of African literature emanating from an authoritative source is also worth referring to, and how unpopular the "Imperial Factor" was considered to be in Capetown may be gathered from the following sentence in Sir Charles Warren's paper: "Mr Rhodes pointed out that the Imperial Factor which he had warned the House against had now been introduced, and stated that Mr Mackenzie more or less sympathised with the native tribes of Bechuanaland as against the Europeans, and proposed that the Colony should take Bechuanaland, and thus obtain an enormous asset in the shape of Colonial Crown lands, and remove the Imperial Factor." There were some of the Afrikaner party who were anxious to see the country transferred to the Transvaal, and then the road to the interior would have been blocked as far as British enterprise was concerned. In the complicated history of these few years it is impossible to approve of the conduct of Sir Hercules Robinson, and we may leave him to the candid criticism of Mr Mackenzie in his 'Austral Africa, Losing it or Ruling it,' especially in vol. i. p. 331 and following pages. No doubt he was trying to fill two most incongruous and almost impossible posts—viz., that of Gover-

nor of the Cape Colony as well as that of High Commissioner of South Africa; but if we must make invidious comparisons between the officers sent out with her Majesty's wide commission in South Africa during the last fifty years, there are few who have not acquitted themselves more creditably than Sir Hercules Robinson.

However this may be, the "Imperial Factor" was brought very low indeed in South Africa in 1883-85. The indifference of Lord Derby, the morbid sentimentality of Mr Gladstone, had done their worst. The Transvaal had violated clause after clause of the Convention of 1881, foreign intrigue was going on in every direction, and the home Government either knew nothing or cared nothing. The public feeling of Great Britain, and, it may almost mournfully be added, the official conscience, can only be aroused by a great catastrophe, for the simple reason that no one will look ahead and steer the vessel of State with an eye to breakers ahead. Great Britain's interests are world-wide, and her colonial empire stretches into every sea; but there is no spot on the globe where, in view of future developments, a keener outlook should be maintained than at the Cape and South Africa. The Transvaal crisis has suddenly opened the eyes of every one at last. If England steps aside, there are plenty willing to step into her shoes. What! we exclaim, after all our Kaffir wars! our expenses! our prodigal waste of men and money for close upon a hundred years! Can the Cape, so important to us as a maritime and trading Power with vast interests in the East, be abandoned to a number of small republics or to a German domination ruling and intriguing through the Trans-

vaal Republic and the Orange Free State? Can England afford for a moment to sit with folded hands? No; as long as she has a ship afloat or a soldier or sailor to serve, she must keep at all hazards her "South African Empire." The "Imperial Factor" cannot be eliminated except after a national loss that has brought Great Britain to her knees.

It so happens that the whirl of events in South Africa, as by a violent transformation scene, has revealed certain unsuspected elements of strength in the Imperial position. In the first place, without taking too seriously this coquetting between Pretoria and Berlin, or laying too much stress upon the alleged importation of German mercenaries into the Transvaal, together with many other disquieting matters, it is abundantly clear that no European Power can in the final resort take the place of Great Britain in South Africa. This country, with its magnificent merchandise of gems and gold, lies at the disposal of the rulers of the sea around its coast. An independent "United States of South Africa" could not exist without a navy. Again, to more thoughtful politicians in South Africa itself the alternative of German domination, thrust baldly in front of them, staggers them somewhat. It is better to endure the ills they have than fly to others they know not of, either in extent or gravity. After all, Great Britain is, contrasted with European Powers, the champion of free institutions and free colonisation, and she opens her ports to the whole world. In the Cape Colony herself she is now standing as the promised vindicator of "Uitlander rights" and a free press. The Cape colonists fought hard for their priv-

ileges once, and if, immediately after crossing the Vaal river, they find themselves unjustly treated or kept in vassalage by a narrow oligarchy of Boers, whose methods of government are not, to say the least of it, above suspicion, they will naturally rebel. Moreover, the Railway question comes in here very effectively. Supposing Kruger and the Transvaalers pursue a policy of isolation as far as the Cape Colony is concerned, and favour the Delagoa Bay route at the expense of Table Bay and Port Elizabeth, what becomes of that great railway-system of the Cape which is the most valuable public asset the Cape colonists possess, the failure of which would probably land them in bankruptcy? Interest on borrowed capital has to be paid punctually, otherwise the ugly word repudiation stares a colony or State in the face. At all risks and at all hazards the share in the Transvaal trade must be preserved. The ideally best thing to happen for the Cape Colony would be, of course, the confederation of all South African States, with a common agreement as to Rates and Routes. The mercantile and commercial interests of the Cape Colony are dead against closing the Vaal river drifts or the checking of the Transvaal trade. It so happens that whether it is to stand between South Africa and any European Power, or as a mediator with the Transvaal Government on the sub-

ject of "Uitlander" privileges, or as a consolidating Power that can push forward gradually and without friction the project of a South African Dominion, the presence of the Imperial Factor is an absolute necessity. One of the first steps for the Imperial Factor to take is to assert itself more really and more directly in South Africa. A separate Commissionership, corresponding directly with the Home Government, must be established at some central spot in the interior of Africa. There must be an end, for the present, anyhow, of the continual absorption and incorporation of native territories under colonial rule until, perhaps, with greater agreement and unanimity between the European communities themselves, the time has come for the future members of a confederating South Africa to meet together at a common council table, and agree upon the line of a common native policy. South African Federation will not flourish if it is forced unduly, but, following the Canadian analogy, some of the principal confederating members may agree amongst themselves first of all, leaving it to the rest to follow where and how they choose. The initiative in this Imperial measure should come from the Home Government, and it is from this supreme consideration alone that Great Britain should cease to efface herself, as in the eighties, and take up a strong and determined position.

HILDA STRAFFORD: A CALIFORNIAN STORY.¹

BY BEATRICE HARRADEN.

CHAPTER VII.—THE GREAT MIRACLE.

To enjoy and appreciate to its fullest possibilities a Californian spring, let me choose, for one, to live first through a Californian summer. Then I can see the great miracle with my own eyes,—watch it in its tiniest and swiftest workings, and follow it with loving wonder.

Now those plains and slopes yonder lay bare and brown for many months: everything on them was scorched up and covered with thickening dust. The sumac, to be sure, kept its greenness, and even sent out tender shoots, just to remind us perhaps that Nature was not really dead, but slumbering beneath her ugly garment of dust and withered growth, even as elsewhere she takes her time of rest beneath a lovelier covering of purest white. The foothills were barren of any kind of beauty: the very stones and rocks wore an uncompromising air of ugliness, and the whole country seemed to be without a single charm until the hour of sunset, and then the mountains were tinged with purple light, and the great boulders themselves appeared to have donned for the moment a suit of purple heather.

Ah, for the green pastures in other countries then, for the deep lanes and forests of trees, for the brooks and rivers, for the grass and ferns and mosses, and for everything in Nature soothing to the eye and comforting to the spirit!

But as time went on, my friends, regret and longing crept stealthily

away, and curiosity and wonder took their place, for some change was coming over the country almost imperceptible and most mysterious. There was no rain, but the night-fogs cast their moisture on the dried-up bush and starved-looking chaparral. Tiny leaves broke forth and gave the first sure sign that the long summer sleep was over. And surely those hills had lost their former crude brown colouring, and had mellowed into tenderer tints. There was a softening spell over everything, and a strange sense of unrest. The heavens looked troubled, and threatened rain at last. But still no rain came, and yet one might see how the fresh growth was struggling to assert itself unaided. Then, after many days of waiting, the rains fell.

And Nature began to work her beautiful miracle. She had delayed so long that she had to work quickly, but those who cared enough could follow her in every detail.

A few faint signs of grass on the roadside, the palest shimmer of green on the slopes, fine little leaves springing from the ground, a tiny flower here and there, and in the cañons frail ferns.

Then a luxuriance of green: vast expanses of young fresh grain on the foothills and in the great plain yonder: stretches of emerald grass almost dazzling in its intensity, with a dash of even brighter colour, matched only by the sea-moss on

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the rocks: green fields of pasture in the valley, and on the heights green brushwood spread like a soft velvet mantle over the distant ridges.

And then the flowers springing up in places where neither growth nor life seems possible.

Carpets of the little pink blossom of the alfilaria, the first spring flower: carpets of the golden violets charged with delicious fragrance, and of the shooting-stars, so dainty with petals of white and delicate purple, and so generous of sweetest perfume.

Colours of every hue: masses of wild hyacinths, pale lavender in shade, thousands of yellow flowers varying from a faint tint to a deep orange: blue, pink, red, purple flowers, any you will, and amongst them delicate white ones of many lovely designs.

And the splendid poppy flaming and flashing in the sunlight, and the rich indigo larkspur, and the vetches and lupins and the lilies—how can one tell of them all, and how can one describe the gladness and gratitude and wonder which their presence calls forth?

And then in cañons and timbered hiding-places, known only to those who pry and probe, many a curious and lovely flower. And as the

weeks go on, fresh treasures, revealing themselves in place of those which have passed out of sight: glorious monster poppies of crinkled white satin, and yellow hairy Mariposa lilies, just like luscious yellow butterflies. Vines and creepers trailing on the ground, and festooning shrubs and rocks; sweet scents wafted now from here and now from there, and now mingling together in fragrant accord.

And all these wonders tenfold more wonderful because of that burnt and dried-up soil from which nothing beautiful seemed possible.

But stay! The summer is here once more. The foothills are brown again: the slopes and plains where the grain has been grown and cut have chosen for themselves the colour of old gold plush. Brown and old gold: surely a charming combination.

Is it that familiar scenes take on an ever-increasing beauty? Is it that the more intently we look, all the more surely do we see fresh loveliness even when we gaze into the heavens at eventide, first one star revealing itself to us, and then another? Or is it that we know spring will come indeed, bringing those treasures which enchanted us?

CHAPTER VIII.—ROBERT TAKES HEART.

So every day the country put on fresh beauties, and Robert was a little comforted to see that Hilda took pleasure in watching the quick growth and marking the constant change in the scenery.

"And when the wild-flowers are at their best," he said, "you will begin to think that Southern California is a beautiful land after all. That foothill yonder will be aglow with orange-coloured

poppies, and those other slopes over there across the river will be covered with brightest mustard. I admire the mustard more than anything."

She smiled at him, and found something kind to say about all the wonderful surprises in store for her, and she seemed so appreciative of the fresh charms of the country, which were unfolding themselves to her one by one, that

he began to hope she might yet learn to care for the new life and the new land. He put his troubles bravely on one side and went back to work. Hilda saw him contemplating his ruined ranch; and when he came in, although he tried to conceal his feelings, yet his thin face wore a peculiar look of pain, which softened her almost into tenderness. He said very little about the disaster, and spoke only of filling up the wash, leveling the land, ploughing and cultivating it, and getting it in good condition for the planting of fresh lemon-trees. All this meant terribly hard work, and he looked really quite unfit to take the slightest exertion. Ben was anxious about him, and came over every day to help with the cultivating of that part of the ranch which had escaped damage. He pushed Bob quietly away and took possession of the cultivator.

"Sit down and smoke, old man," he said. "You're about as fit to do this kind of job as a kitten."

Bob was glad enough to rest. He watched Ben, smoked his pipe, and smiled to hear his friend swearing at the horses.

"I'm so fearfully tired, Ben," he said. "I suppose it is the worry and the disappointment and all that. But I shall be rested in a day or two, and then I must tackle that waste land. I daresay in a fortnight's time, if we don't have any more rain, the ground will be solid enough to be worked."

"It will be a big business," Ben said, glancing in that direction.

"I shall have no peace until I have started it," Bob said, doggedly.

"Well, we are all coming to help," Ben answered. "All the fellows are sorry, and you will have quite a little gang round you. Holles is a splendid worker when

he chooses, and he'll go ahead like a ship on fire for your sake."

"You boys are good to me," Bob said, gratefully. "I know you will help me."

Then he added half-shyly—

"The little wife is ever so kind about the whole affair. And I do believe she is beginning to like the life out here better than she ever thought she would. I've been terribly worried about her, Ben. In spite of my great happiness, I feel it was selfish of me to ask her to leave England and her people, and the many pleasures and interests she has always had in her life over there."

"She needn't have come," Ben answered, stoutly.

Bob smiled happily.

"No, that is just the comfort of it," he said. "She came because she cared about me. But, nevertheless, I am anxious the whole time. When anything pleases her, I cheer up a little, and lately she has taken so kindly to the riding. She will soon be a splendid horse-woman. She looks well on a horse."

"Yes, by Jove!" answered Ben, enthusiastically.

"And the country is coming on beautifully," continued Bob. "We shall have an abundance of flowers. That will be a pleasure to her. But she doesn't touch the piano. She sits down beside it, looks at it, and goes away. At home she used to play by the hour."

"She will play in time," said Ben, kindly; "just leave her to choose her own moment. Some day when you least expect it, you will hear her touching the notes."

But he went away with his heart very sore about his friend, for though he believed that Hilda was trying her best to seize hold of the new life and make what she could of it, he remembered his long conversation with her, and felt that she would never be reconciled to

the lot which she had deliberately chosen. She had not once referred to her outburst of confidence that afternoon: at first she had seemed a little nervous in his presence; but as the days passed by and she saw him constantly, the slight uneasiness of manner took to flight. She trusted to his kindness, and he knew it. He knew, too, that she liked him and looked forward to seeing him, and for his own part he could not but admire the brave attempt she was making to adapt herself to these difficult circumstances. It was altogether admirable. But that set expression on her face betrayed to him the real state of her mind, and he trembled for Bob. And yet he had to own that she was good to her husband. Strong as a panther herself, she did not understand much about ill-health, but she tried to save his strength. Only she did not love him. It was this that Ben resented in her. Still he was greatly attracted to her at times, much against his will and against his prejudices. Then he would go home twirling his moustaches and swearing softly and continuously.

So the weeks slipped away, and Bob began to work at the ruined half of his ranch. He looked very frail, and there was something about his unrelenting doggedness which filled Ben with alarm. Nothing would induce him to spare himself over this difficult task. He might be seen at any hour of the day struggling with that stubborn land, filling up the wash-outs, now and then pausing to rest, and after a few moments returning with redoubled zeal to his tedious occupation. It made no difference to his quiet persistence when the other men came to help him. Ben worked alongside with him, and could not induce him to leave off; Graham, Lauderdale, and Holles

rode over constantly and gave him the best of their strength and willingness, but he never relaxed for their presence—indeed they rather stimulated him to further efforts. Holles was in capital form, and kept every one in good spirits.

"I never remember to have worked as hard as this," he said, once or twice. "It just shows what a beautiful character I am, if people would only believe it. I wouldn't have done it for myself. But I am not really properly appreciated in this neighbourhood."

Hilda liked him immensely, and was always ready to hear his unique experiences by land and by sea. She laughed till the tears streamed down her cheeks, for Holles had a method of narrating quite his own. He told her, too, of his famous feud with the ear-trumpet lady, and how he had refused to work for her because he preferred not to be watched through an opera-glass.

"Ben does not mind being watched through an opera-glass," he said, "and I believe Bob rather likes it. But, even if I were on the verge of starvation, I would not work on such infamous conditions. No; I still have some lingering sense of dignity, and that wretched old woman will never have the benefit of my valuable services. But there! I forgot she was a friend of yours and had lent you her piano. Does she come and listen to you through an opera-glass?"

"She came once," answered Hilda, "but she did not ask me to play, and she was particularly kind about the piano, and told me to keep it as long as I pleased. She is away now, but when she returns I must go and see her."

"Well, I think all the better of her," said Holles, brightly. "Perhaps I will work for her."

Then he told Hilda he was passionately fond of music, and he asked her to play for him.

"I have never cared for anything so much as for music," he said, gently. "It always had a mysterious influence over me. Do you know, I believe it appeals to the best part of us. Sometimes when I've been in the back-country knocking about and not knowing where I was going next, a most painful yearning for music has come over me, and I have positively suffered from the deprivation. At moments like that it is an awful thing to be cut off from all possibility of easing one's longing."

Hilda made no answer. She touched the key-board, and after hesitating, she played some dainty old French gavotte. She followed it up with a mazurka by Godard.

"Did you like that?" she asked.

Jesse's face had fallen. He looked unsatisfied.

"Play me something sad now," he said. "That is the music one cares for most, because it is the truest, I suppose."

Her fingers wandered aimlessly over the notes.

"I don't know that I can play anything sad to you," she said, quietly.

"Why not?" he asked, shyly, for her manner had suddenly intimidated him.

"Because I don't believe I dare trust myself," she said, more to herself than to him.

She struck a few chords and began one of Chopin's Nocturnes. She broke off abruptly, rose from the piano, and went to the win-

dow. When she turned round again Holles had gone. He had understood.

But out on the ranch, Ben and Bob looked at each other when they heard the strains of music, and Bob's face was aglow with pleasure. Ben was glad too.

"My little wife has gone back to her music," Bob said. "Now all will be well with her. I feel as though things were going on better, and as though she were not fretting so much for the old country."

Then the music ceased abruptly.

"She did not finish that melody," he said, a little uneasily.

"I daresay she is tired," Ben said, reassuringly.

Meanwhile Hilda rested on the honeysuckle verandah, and looked at the distant ranges of mountains and the foothills nestling up to them as children to their parents; she listened to the sweet notes of the mocking-bird who had lately taken up his quarters on the barn; she watched the flight of a company of wild ducks; and she glanced at the garden, where the flowers were growing apace.

The camphor-trees were coming on bravely, and she was glad to see that the grass was sprouting up. She tried to give her mind to each separate thing which attracted her attention; and as the sun sank and the tender rosy glow spread over hill and mountain, she stared fixedly at the beautiful sight until it faded into a tender vagueness. And then once more Chopin's Nocturne stole on her remembrance, overwhelming her with regret.

CHAPTER IX.—SCHUMANN'S NACHTSTÜCK.

Everything went on as usual in the little community. Robert Strafford worked incessantly, and,

in addition to the help he received from his friends, had engaged the services of a Chinaman, and had

made great strides with the redeeming of his land. His father had sent him some money, and told him that he should remit a further sum in a month or two, and Robert went to a lemon-nursery at once and bought five hundred Lisbons, budded on the sour root. He was so engrossed in his ranch that he did not notice how little interest Hilda was taking in all his schemes. She seemed cheerful, and was busy from morning till night, had learnt to milk the cow, and even helped on the ranch; but Ben, who observed her closely, believed that her cheerfulness was assumed, and that her ready conversation came from the lips only, and that her eagerness for work arose merely from her desire to do battle with her regrets. But Bob had taken heart and courage about her; and now eased in monetary matters by his father's generous help, felt that he was at last coming out into the sunlight of life. So great was his confidence in his ultimate success, and so convincing was his dogged persistence, that, in spite of his misfortunes and his frail health, the minds of his companions leapt forward, as it were, three or four years, and the picture of a flourishing little ranch, more prosperous than any other in the neighbourhood, forced itself upon their attention.

It was nearly six weeks now since Hilda had touched the piano. But to-day Robert had gone with the waggon into the village, and she was alone on the ranch. She had been reading some of her home letters, and looking at some photographs of Canterbury and Winchester, half deciding to frame them, and finally concluding to put them away. She opened the piano, and placed her music on the stand. She chose a volume of Chopin, another of Schumann, and some pieces by Brahms and Grieg.

She played well. Her touch was firm and virile, but wanting in tenderness. She played one of Chopin's Impromptus and one of his Ballades, and after that she passed on to his Nocturnes. She stopped now and again and covered her face with her hands. She was quite tearless. Then she played both of Brahms's Rhapsodies, and some numbers out of Schumann's *Carnéval*. She leaned back in her chair, looking almost like a statue. Her fingers sought the notes once more, and she played Grieg's *Einsamer Wanderer*, which is so intensely sad.

"Jesse Holles would like that," she said to herself; "but I could never play it to him."

She paused, and her hands rested insensibly on the keys.

"Oh, I must have been mad," she said, with something like a sob, "to have so much and to give it all up, *and for what?* Ah, if one could only free oneself!"

She drifted into Schumann's *Kinderscenen*, choosing unconsciously the saddest numbers, and then she struck the arpeggio chords and began his most wonderful *Nachtstück*.

It is fraught with melancholy, regret, longing, pity — and what else besides? But surely it is idle work to describe beautiful music. As we play and as we listen, if we are lovers of music, we use our own interpretation; we weave our own feelings, our own emotions, our own aspirations and regrets into it, and lo! for the moment we have made it our own language.

. . . Before Hilda had reached the closing phrases of the *Nachtstück*, her self-control broke down completely. She nestled up to the piano, her arms resting on the finger-board, her head bowed over them. She sobbed unceasingly. The tears streamed unheeded from her eyes. There seemed to be no

end to the sobbing, no end to the tears.

But at last she raised herself, and clasped her hands together at the back of her neck and looked up. Her husband was standing in the doorway.

"Hilda!" he cried, and he advanced a step, his arms extended.

"No, no!" she cried, turning from him. "I want to be alone, I must be alone, I'm too utterly wretched for words. It's all of no use, I can't stand this life out here; it will just kill me—it isn't life, it is only existence, and such an existence too! I must have been mad to come—I was mad, every one was against it—my mother and father and friends, all of them. But I didn't know what I was coming to—how could any one know?—how could I picture to myself the desolation and the deadness and the dull monotony, and the absence of everything picturesque, and the barren country, which at its best can never be comforting? I hate those mountains there, I could shake them, and I could go out and tread down all those wretched rows of wretched little trees—it's all an absurd mockery of a life, it's starvation from beginning to end. You just feel that there is nothing to live for, and you cry out the whole time to be done with it. Yes, I was mad, mad to leave everything and come—I can see it well enough now, when it is too late. But it was little enough you told me in your letters. Why didn't you make me understand clearly what I was coming to? And yet you did try—I remember you tried;

but how could any one ever describe the awful desolation? Oh, it's simply heart-breaking. And to think it has to continue month after month, and year after year, and that there is no escape from it. How shall I ever bear myself? How can I possibly go on, drudging all the day long? for that is what the life out here means to a woman—drudgery and desolation, and it's wickedly cruel."

Robert Strafford stood there paralysed.

"And such an unattractive place to settle in," she continued, wildly, "when there are entrancing parts of the country near at hand: I saw them myself on the journey. If one had to come, why not have chosen a spot worth living in, where some kind of social existence was possible, instead of burying oneself in a wilderness like this? But nothing could ever make up to one for all one had lost, and if I were a man, I would rather starve at home in my old career than cut myself off from the throb and pulsation of a fuller life. Yes, indeed I would, and to-morrow I would turn my face homewards and thank God that I had freed myself at last, in spite of every one and everything, freed myself at last—oh God! when I think of it all. . . ."

Robert's face was ashen. Twice he tried to speak, and his voice failed him.

Then he said, quite quietly—

"Never fear, Hilda, you shall have your freedom."

He opened the door and passed noiselessly out of the house.

CHAPTER X.—A STRICKEN MAN.

He chose the road which led to Ben's ranch, and he went along at an almost feverish pace, not stop-

ping to rest for a single moment, during all those seven miles. When Ben saw him he knew at once from

the terrible expression on his face that some trouble had befallen him. He led him silently into the house, pushed him gently into the arm-chair, and with a tenderness all his own forced him to take some food and stimulant; and then drawing his chair alongside, and lighting his pipe afresh, he waited as close friends know how to wait for the moment when the heart desires to ease itself. Then Robert spoke, but so quietly that his very manner would have awed any listener, and it filled Ben with apprehension.

"Ben," he said, "Hilda has told me to-night how she hates the whole life. She bitterly regrets having come, she bitterly reproaches me for having settled in the country, and I recognise the truth of everything she says. She yearns to be free again, and she shall have her freedom. It is the very least I can do for her. But I'm a stricken man. I've been fool enough to think she cared for me—I've loved her so much myself, that it did not seem possible she could not care a little for me—and I've been fool enough to try and make myself believe that in time she might get reconciled to this Californian life. I might have known it was never at any moment possible. I've made a wretched failure of my life and career over in England and over here, and I've earned for myself not her love, nor her tenderness, nor even her sympathy, but her scorn. Ben, I felt it in every word she said. I can never forget my humiliation, I can never forget her scorn. I could have fought through other things, but not that. If that's all one gets for all one's years of longing and labour, then the game isn't worth the candle. Do you remember me telling you that the worst thing which could happen to me would be, not her changing her

mind and throwing me over, but her disappointment and her scorn? Do you remember that? You laughed at me, and tried to chase away my misgivings, but it seems to me now that our misgivings are about the only things in our lives which can't be called failures."

Ben drew nearer to his friend.

"Dear old man," he said, "take heart again. She was home-sick perhaps, and all the home-longings came leaping out. She could not have meant to be hard. She will bitterly regret her words, and all will be well between you again. You will forgive her, and the wound will be healed."

"There is nothing to forgive," Robert said, quietly. "I don't blame her at all, but I blame myself bitterly, bitterly."

"But I blame her," said Ben, fiercely, "and face to face I shall tell her so."

"The only thing I have against her is that she has not cared in the very least for me," Robert said, "and words cannot mend that, Ben."

He leaned back wearily in the chair, looking almost as though he had ceased to be of the world. The silence was broken only by the note of the mocking-bird, and the noise of the brown mare knocking impatiently against the stall.

"She must go home to the life which she gave up for me," Robert said, after a long pause. "I don't want her sacrifices: they are not worth anything to me. I think I have enough money left for her passage, and if not, I know you'll help me out. I must give her her freedom at once."

He rose abruptly, but sank back with a groan, his hand to his heart.

"Ben," he murmured, "we must——"

He fainted away.

Ben got him on the ground,

loosened his shirt, tended him as he had so often done before in similar attacks, and he came back to life once more. After a time Ben put him to bed like a little tired child. He held Ben's hand and looked into his kind face, and smiled.

"Dear old fellow," he said, tenderly, "dear old fellow. We must send her home, Ben," he said, as he turned his face to the wall.

Then he raised himself for a moment.

"She was mistaken about one thing," he said. "She had seen some of those settled-up parts on her way out here, and they seemed attractive to her, and she reproached me for not having bought land there. But you know, Ben, I had not the money for that sort of thing—you know I could not have afforded to pay fancy prices for my ranch. But it was only that she did not understand."

After that he fell asleep from sheer exhaustion, and Ben crept back into the living-room, half beside himself with indignation and anxiety. He felt he ought to let Hilda know that Robert was with him, and yet it was quite impossible for him to leave his friend. He longed to see her and speak his mind to her about her cruelty. His whole being was at feud with her. A torrent of words rushed to his lips, and broke off into impotent silence.

There was a knock at the door. When he opened it he found Hilda outside.

"Robert is here?" she asked, breathlessly.

"Robert is here," he answered, coldly.

He had stood barring the door as it were, and now he stepped back to let her pass in.

"I must see him at once," she

said, turning round defiantly to Ben.

"He is sleeping," Ben said, sternly. "At least let him rest a while."

He lit the lamp and placed it on the table, and then looked her straight in the face.

"You have heard everything from Robert," she said, shrinking back almost imperceptibly.

"Robert has told me of his trouble," Ben answered, trying manfully to restrain his anger. But he thought of his friend stricken to the heart, and his indignation could no longer be smothered.

"I blame you bitterly," he said, folding his arms together tightly and towering before her. "Yes, you shall hear what I think of you—he says he has nothing against you, but I have everything against you! If you had not a heart to bring with you, and some kind of tenderness, why did you come out here? No one made you come. You could have stayed at home if you had chosen. That would have been better than this. But to come and give him nothing but scorn, and throw his failure in his face, and make him feel that you despise him for not having done better in the old country—I tell you that you are the one to be despised."

"It is not your part to talk to me like this," she said, interrupting him fiercely. "You are not my judge."

"And yet I do judge you," he flung out fearlessly, and then he glanced at her, and stopped short in the very heat of his anger and resentment, for her face wore a terribly strained expression of pain, and his gentler feelings were aroused even at that moment. "Ah, well," he said, "words are not of much use after all, I am so

bitterly sorry for him, and for you too—there's nothing I would not do to set things right for you both."

His kinder manner softened her at once.

"I never meant to speak to him as I did this afternoon," she said—"I don't know how it was that I could not control myself better, but I was just wild with regret, and the music had stirred me up to such a pitch that the words came tumbling out of their own accord; and after it was all over and he had gone, I stood there horrified with myself, and terrified for him because I knew he cared so much. And that's been the awful part of it all through: he has cared so much, and I seem to have cared so little. Oh, you don't realise how I've tried to take up this life—day after day I've begun over again and struggled to put from me the dull feeling of depression, but it came back ten times worse, until I've been in despair: naturally enough you have only seen the one side, but you wouldn't think so harshly of me if you'd known how I've tried, and how everything has been against the grain——"

He turned to her with something of his old kind bearing.

"I know you've tried," he said, slowly; and some of the pain passed from her face when he spoke these words.

"I think I would like to see if he is still sleeping," she said, almost pleadingly.

Ben pointed to the bedroom door.

"Don't rouse him," he said. "If he sleeps long and heavily he may wake refreshed. But I think he is very ill. He has just had one of his fainting fits, and an obstinate one too, and his state of exhaustion afterwards has made me horribly anxious."

She turned pale, and went softly into the bedroom. She came back in a few minutes and found Ben preparing supper. He looked up at her eagerly, and was relieved when she told him that Robert was still sleeping soundly, and that she had not lingered lest she might disturb him.

"He was murmuring something about not being able to pay a fancy price for land," she said. "I wonder what he meant."

"He took it greatly to heart that you thought he might have bought land in a more settled part of the country," Ben replied. "But he could not have afforded to do that."

"He looks very ill," Hilda said, half dreamily.

"I have been anxious for him these many months," Ben said, quietly. "He never had much strength, and he has overtaxed it with his ranch and his reservoir. It is the story of many a rancher in California."

"And I've not helped him," Hilda said.

Ben was silent.

"I'd give anything on earth to undo this afternoon's work," she said, with painful eagerness. "And it's so awful to sit here and not be able to tell him that. I long for him to rest, and yet I long for him to wake. I don't know how to bear myself."

"You must wait," Ben said, gently.

So they waited and watched together. It was a lovely night, and the country was bathed in moonlight. The mountains were darkly outlined against the silvery sky. The world seemed to be one vast fairy-land, wrapt in mystery and peace. On such a night a poet might have woven dreams, an idealist might have seen bright visions, and to them

the hours would have faded imperceptibly like the moonlight into day.

But to Hilda that time of waiting seemed endless. She looked out on the fairy scene, and then came back gratefully to the fire which Ben had built up directly the night turned chilly. He sat near her, smoking his pipe and twirling his great moustaches. Once when he saw her shiver, he rose and fetched a rug for her and wrapped it around her, and threw a few more logs on the fire. They did not attempt conversation now: they sat rigidly upright, waiting for the morning to dawn. Once she drowsed a little, and when she opened her eyes again Ben told her that Robert had called out loudly in his sleep, but was now resting quietly.

"The morning is almost here," he said; "it is half-past three."

She drowsed once more, and the clock was striking five when she suddenly started up and stole into the bedroom. She bent over her husband and looked at his pale face. He lay there absolutely still: there was no sound of breathing—no movement of the limbs. A sudden fear seized her.

"Ben!" she cried, "Ben!"

Ben Overleigh heard his name and felt the thrill of terror in her voice, and knew by the answering terror in his own heart that the dreaded trouble had come at last. Together they raised that quiet form, and strove by every means they knew to bring it back to consciousness and life—but all in vain.

Then he shrank back from her, and his fiercest anger took possession of him.

"So you have your freedom," he said.

CHAPTER XI.—PASSION AND LOYALTY.

There was great sorrow felt when the news spread about that Robert Strafford had died, but there was no surprise, for his friends had long since seen that he was slipping away from them, having reduced himself to the last inch of his strength through overwork and anxiety. It was an old story in Southern California, and one not rightly understood in the old country, but Ben Overleigh explained it in the letter which he wrote to Robert's father.

"We buried him yesterday," he wrote, "and his wife and we fellows who had known him and loved him stood by the grave. He never had much strength, but what he had he taxed to the uttermost. These last months he worked like one possessed. No delicate frame could stand it, and

then he was unhappy about his wife, seeing her so home-sick. That finished matters for him. I remember when I first saw him about four years ago, I thought it sheer madness for a frail young fellow like that to come out to a life of physical toil. Ranching is not child's play, and if you want to succeed, you don't sit down and watch your trees, you work at them the whole time, and it isn't light work. To leave a city office and come and be in the open air the whole day sounds inviting, but some of those who try it, and have not much physical strength, go under. I wish this could be better understood in the old country. But I expect no one realises, until he tries for himself, what hard work manual labour really is, when one has never been accustomed to

it and knows nothing about it. Two years ago a young English doctor here died in the same way. He knew he had drained himself of strength, and that his heart was worn out. I want you to know we all loved your son, and as for myself, he leaves me bereft indeed. I shall buy his ranch and work it together with mine. His wife will no doubt return as soon as she can, but at present there is a tremendous railway strike going on, and we are entirely cut off from the Eastern States. But some of the mails get through, and so I will risk it and send this letter."

Ben seemed to be quite a broken man, and went about his work as one seeing nothing and caring for nothing. Graham and Lauderdale and Holles tried their best to reach him with their kindness and sympathy; but he seemed un-reachable, as though he had climbed to some distant mountain and had cut himself off from human aid. But he liked to have Jesse Holles near him, remembering always that Jesse had been fond of Robert, and had given him many an hour of willing help. He looked after his ranch as usual, and rode over to Hilda every day without fail. He spent very little of his time with her personally, but worked on Robert's ranch, finding a melancholy satisfaction in continuing what his friend had begun. He tended the horses and helped Hilda in many ways. He cultivated, he pruned, and then he came up to the house and sat down quietly with her, watching her as she prepared tea, watching and wondering and turning over many things in his mind. He was intensely sorry for her, but he had not told her that in words, although he knew she understood it from his deeds. In spite of all

that had occurred he could not help being strongly attracted to her, and sometimes when he was alone at home he found himself torn in pieces by his great bereavement, by his sympathy with Hilda's remorse, by his attraction to her and his repulsion from her. Thus the storm swept furiously over Ben Overleigh. He told her once or twice that he would like to buy Robert's ranch, and he thought they would not have any difficulty in arranging the matter. She did not make any definite reply, nor did she show any interest in his suggestion. She seemed strangely indifferent about the fate of the ranch, and about her own affairs and plans, which were being held in abeyance by the great railway strike. It was obvious, of course, that she would return home as soon as she could, but she never once spoke of home, and never once referred to the strike as interfering in any way with her own intentions. But she did speak of Robert, and then there was no mistaking the remorse in her manner and the awe in her voice.

"I can never forget how I wounded him," she said.

Ben did not answer her on these occasions, and his silence always stung her.

"You condemn me utterly," she said, almost pleadingly, and she showed by her intensity how much she cared for what this man thought of her. She showed it all the more as the days went on, and, after all, it was natural enough that she should turn to him as her only friend in this distant country, where she was a complete stranger. But the matter did not end there. She was strongly attracted to him, and either she could not or would not hide it. At one moment a thrill of contempt would pass through Ben,

and he could have turned from her as from something which soiled his soul; and at another moment a throb of passion would possess him, and he could have thrown up everything for her, his loyalty to his friend, his sense of dignity and fitness, his own estimate of her character—everything he could have swept to the winds. He noticed, too, that as the time went on she seemed to become more reconciled to the scenery; and indeed the country was looking entrancingly beautiful. All Robert's promises to her had come true: the foothills were powdered with gold; some of the slopes were arrayed in bright attire of orange-coloured poppies, and others had chosen for themselves a luxurious garment of wild mustard. Then there was the dazzling green grass, and the vast expanse of grain-fields, and in the distance yonder there were patches of purple and yellow flowers, reminding one of the gorse and heather in the old country. And the grim barren mountains looked down indulgently on all this finery, like old people who have had their days of vanity and are content to watch the young bedeck themselves so gaily. And the air was laden with the heavy fragrances of the flowers and the orange and lemon blossoms. Hilda drove out every day, and brought back endless treasures,—wild lilac, wild azalea, and maiden-hair from some distant cañon. Her one consolation was to be out of the house: she drove, or she rode the pretty little mare which Robert had chosen so lovingly for her, and sometimes she strolled, taking with her a stout stick in case she came across any snakes. Nellie, the pointer, who had fretted piteously since Robert's death, went with her, and whatever she did, the dog was always to be

seen following her. Hilda's health had not suffered from the shock which she had sustained, but she often looked anxious and desolate, and some of the people who saw her about thought she had changed sadly; but they said that was not to be wondered at, considering the sad circumstances of her husband's death, and the long continuance of the railway strike, which made it impossible for her to join her friends.

But one evening whilst she was sitting on the honeysuckle porch Holles rode up waving a paper in his hands.

"Such good news!" he cried; "the strike is over. There has been some kind of a compromise between the company and the men, and some of the mails are through. I've got a ton-load for you in this gunny-sack. Nothing for me, of course, except my religious paper. That never gets lost."

She put the magazines on one side, and opened her home letters. They were the first she had received in answer to her own letter telling of Robert's death. Her father wrote most kindly, enclosing an order on one of the banks to cover her passage-money.

"Of course you will come back at once," he said, "and take up your life where you left it."

The letter fell from her hands.

The old life was offered to her again. There it was waiting for her, and she was free to go and accept it, and taste once more of the things for which she had been starving.

She was free. There was no one and nothing to hinder her. She could go back and put these sad events and her remorse and her great mistake away from her remembrance. She argued that one had not to suffer all through

one's life for a mistake. She had not meant to be cruel to poor Robert, but she ought never to have come at all. And now she was free to go, and these months would seem to her as a time of which she had dreamed during an uneasy night.

But no sense of gladness or thankfulness came over her. She sat there and bit her lips.

Home? What did she want with home?

She rose and went into the living-room, carelessly throwing her letters and papers on the table. The bank bill fell down, and she stooped and picked it up, and her fingers moved as though they were being impelled to tear it in shreds.

But she tossed it whole on to the table. She struck a match to light the lamp, but changed her mind and let the darkness creep on unrelieved. Ben Overleigh rode up half an hour afterwards, and found her thus.

"I have come to tell you that the strike is over, and the train service begins to-morrow," he said.

"I have heard," she said, rigidly.

"You must be glad to hear the news," he said. "This time of waiting must have been very trying for you."

She did not answer.

"And now at last you will be able to go home to your friends," he said.

She was silent.

"I wanted to speak to you about the ranch," he continued, a little nervously. "I have set my mind on buying the place and carrying out Robert's ideas. I hope you will give me the opportunity. If you look over his papers you will find at what figure he valued his property. I only speak of it now because I thought that the certainty of being able to sell the ranch

and receive money down at once might make it all the easier for you to arrange your plans, now that the line is open, and return home."

"Home?" she echoed, as though in sudden pain.

Ben started.

"Yes," he said, quickly, "back to the life for which you have been hungering ever since you came, back to all those interests which you threw away and then so bitterly regretted. Now your path is clear before you, and you can go straight on and forget that you ever took a side-turning which led you to uncongenial pastures. Not every one can do that."

"The old life!" she said, wildly, "what does one want with the old life? What do I care about returning? Why should I go home?"

For a moment Ben Overleigh's heart leapt within him. *Why should she go home?* These words were on his very lips, and others came rushing afterwards struggling and wrestling for utterance. The storm raging around and within him for so many weeks now, assailed him with all its fury, and left him standing as firm as those mountains yonder.

"Why should you stay?" he said, calmly; "you have said all along that this Californian life was detestable to you, and that you could never reconcile yourself to it. Have you forgotten that afternoon when you poured out your confidence to me and eased your mind of your misery? Do you remember how you spoke of the isolation, the fearful distance from home, and the absence of stimulus, and the daily drudgery, and the mistake you had made in coming out to such a wretched land and to such a starved existence?"

"Oh, I have not forgotten," she

said, excitedly; "that was the first long breath I'd taken since I left England."

"And do you remember how you said that if you'd only realised what you were coming to, nothing would have made you come," he continued, deliberately,—"neither love nor friendship, nor duty nor regret; and that if you had been a man, you would have preferred to starve in your old career rather than settle in such a land as this?"

"Yes, yes," she broke in, "and I meant every word I said."

"And do you remember how you asked what it was we found to like in the life," he continued, "and whether we would not throw it up to-morrow if we could, and what in the name of heaven we got in exchange for all we had lost?"

"Yes, yes, I remember," she said, breathlessly; "and do you remember what you said then about the women?"

"I said that we men gained in every particular, and that it was a life for men and not for women," he answered.

"Ah, but there was something else," she said, almost desperately. "You said they came off badly here, but that their one salvation was to love passionately, desperately——"

"And if I did say so," he said, turning to her fiercely, "what has that to do with you and me?"

There was no mistaking the ring of contempt in his voice. She smarted in every fibre of her, and then instantly gathered herself together.

"No, you are right," she said, with a quick nervous laugh,—"*it* has not anything to do with you and me."

He had struck a match as she spoke, and lit the lamp, and she came from the window where she

had been standing, and pushed in a heap the letters and papers which were scattered over the table.

"That railway strike has lasted a terribly long time," she said, in tone of voice utterly different from her trembling accents of a few minutes past. "But now, thank goodness, it is all over, and I can arrange my plans at last. My father has sent the money for my return. But it is good of you to wish to make things easy for my journey. I shall not, however, need any more ready money, you see, for the cheque is large enough to pay my expenses twice over in England."

Ben stood there half stunned by her sudden change of manner, and by the consummate way in which she swept from her horizon the whole of this incident between them.

"And now about the ranch," she continued, with the dignity of a queen. "I will look out the papers to-morrow, and then we will settle it as you wish. I do not know any one to whom I could sell dear Robert's ranch with greater pleasure than to you. But you must pay me at your leisure. There is no hurry."

"Good God!" thought Ben. "A few minutes ago this woman was all but throwing herself at my feet, and now she stands there and patronises me."

He could scarcely control his anger and scorn, but he mastered himself, and said quietly—

"I shall be very grateful to have old Robert's ranch. It will be some consolation to me to take care of it and make it my own. You know we loved each other, he and I. But as for payment I shall prefer to give the money down, at once."

"That shall be just as you please," she said, with gracious con-

descension. "And now good-night. I am very tired."

She held out her hand to him, but he looked her straight in the face, then bowed slightly and left her.

CHAPTER XII.—FAREWELL TO CALIFORNIA.

A fortnight afterwards Ben Overleigh and Jesse Holles saw Hilda Strafford off at the station. She looked very pale, and glanced at Ben uneasily from time to time. There was neither scorn nor anger in his manner now, but just the old gentle chivalry, which was the outcome of his best self. His face, too, had lost its expression of restless anxiety, and there was a dignity about his whole bearing which might well have been the outward and visible sign of the quiet dignity of his mind, won after a fierce struggle.

"You shall have news of the

ranch," he said. "When the lemons come into bearing, you shall know."

She smiled thanks, and then turning to Jesse she asked whether she could do anything for him in England.

"Yes," he said, sadly — "kiss the ground for me." And he added more cheerfully, "And send me an illustrated paper sometimes."

"And for you?" she asked of Ben, hesitatingly.

"Kiss the ground for me, too," he answered.

And this time he held out his hand to her, and she grasped it.

Then the train moved off.

AN OLD OXFORD COMMON-ROOM.

DURING the last twenty years we have been reading many books about distinguished Oxford men. Cardinal Newman, Dr Pusey, Dean Church, Mr T. Mozley, Mr Keble, and Mr Ward, have, either in writings of their own or through biographers, given us a complete and vivid picture of the men and questions of the Tractarian movement—a picture indeed so vivid and attractive that there is a danger lest other aspects of thought and work in Oxford should drop out of view.

The writer would be the last to undervalue either of the two great movements which have transformed Oxford within the last sixty years: Tractarianism, and the Liberalism which was its natural consequence, were revivals of religious and intellectual life. The biography of Oxford Liberalism is as yet only half written, but when complete will probably be less interesting than the history of Tractarianism, for the former was mainly negative; the other was strongly affirmative of many things: and more dramatic interest centres round the conversion of Newman and the revolt of Pattison and Froude than round the first University Commission, or the abolition of Tests, or the *Essays and Reviews*.

The story of Tractarianism, as told in Newman's '*Apologia*,' is so full of reality and pathos; the convictions of the men who gave the impulse were so sincere, their characters so pure and lofty, that we are carried away, and see things as they saw them,—they whose interest was so concentrated on one issue, to the exclusion of other questions, secular and religious, of

at least equal importance, that they lived, be it said with all respect, in a world of their own making. We are apt to forget that there were Oxford men in those days who were hostile or indifferent to Tractarianism,—not merely country clergymen and lawyers brought up to vote against it with more zeal than knowledge on the broadest party grounds, but men of learning and ability, who were doing their work, educational or literary, silently, exercising the influence of a quiet life, ignoring questions which seemed to them dangerous, or at best unprofitable. There were others who plunged into the strife and fought Tractarianism; others who neither worked, nor taught, nor fought, but shot, or hunted, or saturated themselves with Greek, or did nothing but grow old. It is sometimes forgotten that Oxford was a larger place, and showed greater diversities of character and interests, than would appear from the memoirs of those who were then unquestionably its best known men.

The quarter of a century after the Reform Bill was the close of a distinct period in the history of Oxford. By the Commission of 1854 changes deep and far-reaching were introduced: the University of Laud gave place to modern Oxford; the supremacy of the colleges, and still more the supremacy of the Heads of Houses, was diminished; and the curriculum of studies was enlarged. These and other changes, more important than any Ordinances of Commissioners, were the product of the mental stir which was agitating England and Europe—as much its

product, though in a narrow area, as the Reform Bill or the Revolution of July.

But the writer aims not at themes so high as the solidarity of European thought, or even the nature and causes of the Oxford Revolution. He wishes to speak only of a social change, of no great importance, but perhaps of interest and worth recording; one of the minor changes due to the same causes as Tractarianism or Liberalism and University Reform—the disappearance of a type of College Head and College Fellow,—a type which could have been produced only in an English University, and which is passing, if it has not passed, into extinction as final and complete as that which has overtaken the dodo or the megatherium. The men who ruled or worked or idled in the college of the pre-Commission period were probably not superior to their successors in energy or learning, but they were more picturesque. A student of character and manners would have found among them more variety, more eccentricity if you will, than he can find now in the body of gentlemen, very much like other gentlemen, and like each other, who govern and administer Oxford. They are hard-worked professional men, with the professional characteristics which hide, if not destroy, individuality: they are too busy, too open-minded, too cosmopolitan to be as quaint and interesting as the simple scholars, or fiery partisans, or eccentric hermits who enlivened and diversified the common-rooms of fifty or sixty years ago. The undergraduate is unchanging as Egypt: Commissions and Revolutions leave him as they find him, self-centred and serene; he is beyond them and above them; but his teachers are Chameleons, and change colour with their sur-

roundings. The traditions of Oxford fade rapidly away; the autocratic Head is no more; the “idle Fellow” here and there survives, mostly in London clubs, where he can be idle without discomfort or discredit, and can escape the irritating spectacle of that unceasing activity, political, social, philanthropic, which seems to him not far removed from restlessness and vanity.

The writer will attempt to describe the Head and Fellow of former days by giving an account of the common-room of his own college,—moved partly by natural piety and love for the home in which he has spent the best part of his life; partly by the fact that Wadham common-room twenty-nine years ago, when he first entered it, was a typical specimen of the old-fashioned kind. It had changed less than most common-rooms, for up till 1867 the Fellowships were not open to members of other colleges. Its traditions were uniform and unbroken, like traditions handed down from generation to generation in a family; it had not been altered nor conventionalised; in its atmosphere character could live and flourish.

The men to be described were in the ordinary sense of the word obscure: only one of them was known outside Oxford; the rest, in their later days at least, were little known outside their own college. But obscure men may be interesting if they are the last of their race. And indeed in this age of notoriety and self-advertisement there is something refreshing about obscure persons,—obscure not because they were dull or feeble, but because they were lazy, or contented, or diffident, or careless of distinction. Faults come to be more kindly regarded as they become more rare, and indolence,

self-distrust, lack of ambition, may come to be held virtues in the twentieth century—already they are distinctions, at any rate pleasing infirmities; and there is a large field for the biographer in the lives of undistinguished persons.

Wadham, the most beautiful of Oxford colleges in the opinion of its sons, and the most beautiful next to their own in the opinion of the sons of other colleges, stood forty years ago almost in the country, with nothing north or east of it save the Museum and green fields: it is still in a great measure what it was called, the Country College, for though it has neighbours close to it in Mansfield and Manchester Colleges, yet these and the cricket-grounds which lie between Wadham and the Cherwell, and farther north the Parks, make one spacious region of almost country—a region of grass and tree and silence, broken only by the songs of birds, and the shouts of Matthew Arnold's "young barbarians all at play."

It is a quiet old college; not old as age is reckoned in Oxford, for it is only nearing the end of its third century, but the soft colouring of the silver-grey stone, crumbled and honeycombed on the south and west, where sun and rain and wind beat on it, gives it the appearance of indefinite antiquity. The beauty of the buildings is in their simplicity and purity; they are like some great Elizabethan or Jacobean country-house turned into a college, splendid yet homely, possessing that double charm which no palace or castle or cathedral has in the same measure—the charm of stately beauty, and the charm of the human interest which belongs to the home of generations who have

spent there the happiest years of life preparing themselves for distinction and success, or obscurity or failure. As you stand in the well-known college garden, one side of which is bounded by the chapel and long line of wall and gables showing half white half grey against the sward from which they rise, you might fancy, if you were a Platonist, that here Plato might have realised the dream of his Republic, and made a home for the chosen youth who were to rule and defend his State; here amid things beautiful "from which come effluences wholesome for the soul, like a breeze bringing health from blessed regions."¹ The Educated Woman, with her unerring perception of the fitness of things, has already, it is whispered, marked Wadham for her own when the day of reckoning comes, and men will have to share with women not merely degrees, but buildings and endowments. She has chosen well, for Tennyson could have imagined no fitter home for the Princess and her companions.

The founders of the college were Nicholas Wadham and Dorothy his wife. He was a Somersetshire squire of high lineage and large estates. His wife was a Petre, and brought to him some of the wealth which the courtiers of Henry VIII. gained when the monasteries were suppressed. Her stern hard face, preserved in her portraits, expresses the despotic vigour with which she probably ruled her husband, and certainly ruled the college which he planned but did not live to see. The college statutes, in the framing of which she took an active part, anticipated many modern ideas: the Fellowships were all of them tenable by lay-

¹ Plato, Republic, 401, C.

men, and were terminable, though she gave a young doctor or lawyer eighteen years to make himself a practice, instead of the scanty seven years with which he has now to be content. But there is nothing in her countenance to suggest that she anticipated or would have approved of the modern reform or perversion of her statutes which gives a place in her college to married Fellows; there is rather an expression which makes one of these anomalies avert his eyes. "Thereby hangs a tale" which might suggest a new situation to our exhausted novel-writers. The foundress, so the story runs, chose for her first Warden a clergyman whose *beaux yeux* touched the heart of the lone widow; she loved him and would fain have married him, but he was cold and irresponsible. He learnt "*furens quid femina possit*" when she introduced the first change into her statutes and ordained that no Warden of Wadham should marry—an ordinance which remained unaltered for two hundred years, till it was repealed for the benefit of Warden Symons by a clause, it is said, appended to a Turnpike Act. Modern criticism respects a love-story no more than it respects the Pentateuch. A comparison of dates shows that Dorothy was wellnigh twice as old as the coy Warden, and that the story is at least improbable. Faith, however, defies criticism.

The history of her college has been quiet and uneventful—one of honourable usefulness: it has done good service to Church and State, and will do more; it has its roll of English worthies, and will enlarge it. In that roll is found the name of Warden Wilkins, the centre of that group of savants who were often gathered together in the Warden's lodgings over the

college gateway, and who, a few years later when they met in London, founded the Royal Society. John Evelyn describes him as the "universally curious Dr Wilkins," and found much pleasure in his company. He invented or projected a universal language which has met the fate that threatens Volapuk; but he was more practical than many philosophers, for he married Cromwell's sister; held high preferment under Charles I.; was made Master of Trinity-Cambridge by Richard Cromwell, and Bishop of Chester by Charles II.—a career which shows great powers of adaptation to environment.

Admiral Blake was a commoner of the college, and Christopher Wren a scholar. Rochester and Sedley received at Wadham an education, the precepts of which they did not practise at the Court of Charles II. Ironsides, its Warden, withstood James II. when he attempted to make Oxford a Roman Catholic seminary. Onslow, the great Speaker of the House of Commons; Harris, the author of '*Hermes*'; Hody, the Hebrew scholar; and in later days Lord Westbury, and the vigorous thinkers who first made known in England the philosophy of Comte, have sustained the honour of their college. Its history has been written, more fully perhaps than the history of any Oxford college, by two of its alumni. Mr R. B. Gardiner has given us, in his '*Register of Wadham College*,' a laborious and faithful record of the names and parentage and academical career of all its members from 1613, the date of its foundation, till the present day. Mr Jackson, in a beautiful book, has written of the architecture and history of the college of which he was a Fellow, and is now an Honorary Fellow; and has re-

produced and perpetuated many of its most characteristic features in the new schools, the new wing of Trinity, and other buildings with which he has enriched Oxford, and yet—no small achievement—preserved its distinctive ancient charm. He has preserved also what can be gleaned from records of the early history of his College—quaint and interesting details, of value for the economist, and still greater value for the student of “sociology,” the new name for human nature; letters written by mothers to sons, or sisters to brothers, which show that boys were sometimes bad, and women always good and kind, in the seventeenth as in the nineteenth century.

The Warden of the college in 1867, when the writer had the good fortune to become one of its Fellows, was Benjamin Parsons Symons. He was known by other names, and was perhaps most commonly called Big Ben by reason of his great strength and stature. He was a man of mark in Oxford, and known outside it as a prominent representative of the Evangelical party: as such he came into collision with the High Churchmen in the stormy days, and his college was regarded for many years as a hotbed of Evangelicalism, and was in some quarters unpopular on that account. It suffered perhaps the Nemesis of sectarianism, and its members may have been as narrow as its critics; but it had a character of its own, a certain sturdiness and vigorous Protestantism, if we may use that term of reproach.

Dr Symons was, we have said, a man of stature, tall, burly, and strong—so strong indeed that he is said to have deterred a crowd of undergraduates who sought at Commemoration to storm the gate

of the Theatre, which he guarded, by the mere threat, “Gentlemen, stand back, or I shall be obliged to exert my strength.”

His mind corresponded to his body; it was burly and strong rather than fine and subtle: it is probable that he never knew a doubt, for he had all the strength of undisturbed conviction. He saw clearly what he desired, and possessed a good deal of Napoleonic directness in the choice of means to ends. His will was strong, and till age enfeebled him he governed as well as reigned in his college. He could not endure contradiction, for opposition seemed to him a sign of incompetence or perverse rebelliousness. So little did he respect the opinions of those who differed from him, that he would use arguments which he must have known to be absurd: thus when one of his Fellows complained of draughts of bitter cold in chapel, caused by some system of ventilation invented by the Warden, he called them “currents of warm air.” For all his real ability, he seemed sometimes stupid and deficient in the sense of the ridiculous: thus in a famous lecture on the Articles, notes of which might have been found in many a country parsonage fifty years ago, he spoke of final causes and adaptations in the world, and the evils which might have arisen had nature made mistakes, and slapping one of the brawny legs which supported his great frame, exclaimed, “Why, this might have been the leg of an elephant.” Indeed the elephant would have had no reason to complain.

But he could be quick and dexterous when occasion needed. He had administered a serious rebuke to an undergraduate for irregularity in attendance at chapel. The

victim, who was a most scrupulous chapel-goer, summoned by a mistake due to a confusion of names, pleaded that he had not missed a chapel during term, and that the other Smith must be the defaulter. The old man did not apologise: he praised the youth for his regularity, but bade him beware lest it should "degenerate into formalism." It was the mixture of opposite and usually incompatible qualities that made him notable and interesting,—the mixture of ready wit with stupidity, a stupidity often ironical; of despotic self-assertion with good-humour, for, like not a few successful men who have had their way for many years, he was genial when not crossed, fond of a joke, full of *bonhomie* and genuine kindness.

He combined mental narrowness with strong common-sense and sagacity; prejudice with great insight into character, at least character of the ordinary kind. He was, like Dr Johnson, dictatorial, something of a sophist, weak when his prejudices misled him, strong when he judged with a fair mind—like him to some extent in bodily presence and in voice, though Johnson had not the lisp which gave character and point to Symons's most trivial utterances. It would have been delightful to see them together, and it is not certain that victory would have been with Johnson, for the Warden was not easily put down.

But Dr Symons was no mere bundle of inconsistencies, no mere comic character; he was a resolute and able man who could make himself felt and feared. His administration of the college both as tutor and as Warden was thoroughly efficient and successful. Though his Fellows and undergraduates laughed at his oddities, as men will laugh at the foibles

of the strong, they did not laugh unkindly; but they laughed a good deal, and let their minds play round him, inventing stories about him which were all at least ethically true.

A legend, for instance, was current that the champion of orthodox evangelicalism was first made aware of the existence, at any rate in his own college, of Broad Church tendencies by a freshman of eighteen. He was a volatile half-French boy, with something in him of the Voltairean spirit, who very readily in the presence of the Warden signed the Thirty-nine Articles, as all undergraduates were then required to do. As he wiped his pen he turned to the Warden and said, "Yes, I like these old forms." His further history is lost in obscurity and gloom.

Mrs Symons—"Lydia," for undergraduates do not hesitate to call the wife of their Head, not to her face, by her Christian name—must have been a woman of character and strong convictions, of whom the writer, who did not know her, for she died several years before he became a Fellow of Wadham, would speak with no levity or disrespect. She, like her husband, was an earnest Evangelical,—indeed the more earnest of the two in this sense, that she thought the Warden sometimes showed mundane, even material, tendencies which called for remonstrance or rebuke. Thus at a breakfast-party the Warden gave some undergraduates an account of the funeral of the Duke of Wellington, which he had attended as a member of the deputation from the University. He said that he had been impressed by many things, but most of all by the vast concourse of spectators, and that as he gazed at the thousands who packed the

streets the reflection occurred to him, "Where will all these people get their dinner?" "I think, my dear, you ought rather to have thought where will they get their spiritual food!" Mrs Symons exclaimed with some acerbity. The Warden could only murmur, "Oh, yes; of course, my dear."

But Mrs Symons could not only rebuke her husband, she could help him in difficulties with true wifely help. When he reached his "anecdote" he was apt to repeat his stories, and it was possible to prophesy with much accuracy when a story would come round at the breakfast-parties, in which the Warden showed himself a very kindly and genial host. A freshman, invited to one such breakfast, was informed by his friends that a certain story would be told. The Warden told it. To the general delight and consternation, the foolish youth remarked after the due laughter had subsided, "They told me, sir, you would give us that story." Mrs Symons had the wit and presence of mind to break the silence by saying, "How pleasant it is to find that the good Warden's words are so well remembered in the college!"

The late Master of Balliol much admired the strength and sagacity of Dr Symons, and was fond of comparing him with Dr Jenkyns, the Master to whom Balliol owes the beginnings of its greatness. They, like Routh and Hawkins, were leaders of men in their little kingdoms,—not *primi inter pares*, but absolute monarchs, such as Dorothy Wadham meant the Head of her college to be: in the quaint language of her statutes she describes him as the queen bee, in whose absence the hive "*obstupescit*"—a word impossible to translate, but expressing bewilderment, confusion, desolation, paralysis.

For good or ill, this theory of the position and influence of the Head of a house has gone the way of the theory of the divine right of kings, of which it was the last relic, and of other theories which survive only in Germany or Russia or Kumasi. The autocratic head is impossible now—some will say because reverence and obedience have left the earth; others will give a more natural explanation, and invoke the Spirit of the Age, which explains so many things, which certainly seems to be dispensing with heroes and leaders of men, whether Mahomets or Luthers or Heads of Houses. A Theophrastus would regret the loss of the strong man, resolute or obstinate, because he had power and knew how to use it, no longer existent among us, who can neither command nor obey.

Of quite another type was Dr Griffiths, the next Warden—a type more in accordance with popular ideas. In a novel or on the stage, if he has appeared there, the College Head is an elderly clergyman of polished but formal manners, courteous and precise, with a certain stateliness about him in keeping with the antiquity and sober dignity of his surroundings. Such was John Griffiths, as his friends called him, for it would have been impossible to call him Jack. The transparent goodness of the man, his kindness and refined consideration for the feelings and interests of others, made formality in him something piquant, like a flavour in a salad or salt, without which goodness is insipid—a kind of east wind in manner, which, though at times disagreeable, is bracing and refreshing. He was above all things accurate—of an accuracy somewhat overstrained, such as is found in leisured University dignitaries,

who have time to be precise, and whose circumstances are more favourable to hair-splitting than the press and hurry of Manchester or London. Stories are told of the great pleasure (for he was human) which it gave him to correct mistakes. Dean Burgon, whose accuracy—except in textual criticism—was not conspicuous, sent to him a short account of Wadham College, asking for criticisms and suggestions. The manuscript was returned with no suggestions, and no more criticism than pencilled here and there the words “how,” “when,” “where”—those awkward interrogatives which are more formidable than most arguments, and which Dr Griffiths used with terrible effect on rash and sweeping utterances.

His slight, well-set-up figure, his scrupulous neatness in dress, his skill and taste in judging prints or pictures—even wines and cookery, abstemious though he was—were in keeping with his other qualities, producing a consistent and harmonious whole—a personification of accuracy, caution, sound judgment, refinement, and gentle dignity difficult to describe. Never did the writer see him to greater advantage than when, in the College Hall at a children’s Christmas party, the Warden, then past seventy, danced a country dance with a little girl of eight. Dancing was once not a shuffle nor a romp, but an art; and the Warden, perhaps a little proud of his neat feet and silver shoe-buckles, gave an exhibition of it which suggested the stately courtesy of the minuet, and ought to have shamed the young men present, whose dancing was more vigorous than graceful. To the imaginative eye, the grim features of Dorothy looking from her portrait on the wall seemed to soften and regard with indulgence

the frolics of a Warden after her own heart; for he was an old bachelor, and no harm could come of them. Dr Griffiths was a genuine product of old Oxford, of the quiet leisure, the easy life, the ceremonious and clerical society which have passed away; the product also of a certain *ἦθος* of the place, which has survived and will survive all change.

In their Fellows still more than in their Heads the colleges under the old conditions produced marked types of men. The Head of a college had to mix in society, and lead a comparatively public life; a Fellow could live, if he chose, in absolute solitude, in a seclusion like Robinson Crusoe’s, with no Man Friday to enliven it.

College life had a gruesome side, and its loneliness and monotony, when lived unwisely, brought shy or morbid men to melancholy ends, but of such we need not speak. In most cases, fortunately, nothing worse than eccentricity was the penalty of a solitary and in a sense an idle life—that is, a life without the wholesome stimulus of fixed duties and definite purpose. Men of course can live such lives in London, and with the same result; but Oxford offers stronger temptations than does a street off Piccadilly to adopt the quiet life of “culture,” that *improba siren* who lures many victims.

Charles Douglas Ross was one of the ablest men in the Oxford of forty years ago. He is described by those who knew him then as a brilliant talker and a wit, a man of great intellectual force and keenness, and, though still young, of wide and varied learning—a combination of qualities so rare that their waste or failure is specially perplexing and pathetic. This brilliant man had latent in him

that indolence, shyness, and eccentricity which in the movement of active life are brushed away like cobwebs, but, like cobwebs too in an unswept room, thicken and spread over a man's mind if he lives alone and idle, even among books.

Ross lived in rooms in Wadham which overlooked the quiet college garden, one of those ideal homes of study in which often, alas! less fruitful work is done than in a dingy and noisy London lodging. His sitting-room and bedroom were piled to the ceiling with books; books overflowed on chairs and sofas—books of all kinds, for their owner was omnivorous, and had the gift of tongues, and read many subjects in many languages. The writer knew him only in his later years, when he had come to dislike general society, and would sit moody and silent, flashing out now and then in very startling epigrams or criticisms, which, though they made many persons uncomfortable, explained and justified the reputation for brilliant talk which he possessed in earlier days. But in a small company of persons whom he knew well, especially when dining *tête-à-tête* with some one whom custom had made acceptable to him, he would pour forth the treasures of his learning in quaint and unconventional, always luminous, utterances, of the incisive brevity which was the peculiar quality of his conversation. But in his conversation only did he show his wealth of knowledge: he wrote nothing save some pages of an Arabic dictionary, which were blown from his window into the garden, and he made no effort to recover them. Those lost pages were emblems of his wasted life—if wasted it was, for who can tell?

His favourite subject was philosophy. Like many other linguists, he used versions of the New Testa-

ment for acquiring the knowledge sufficient for his purpose of the numerous languages which he studied,—many of them deeply, more of them of course merely as materials for the generalisations in which he must have excelled, for he had a keen eye for subtle and remote analogies. He was said to have read all the versions of the New Testament published by the missionary societies, and it is certain that he read a prodigious number of them. His knowledge also of genealogy and the history connected with it was deep and wide, for he was a well-born gentleman, and prided himself on his descent and family connections, as every well-born Scottish gentleman does. Nor was he altogether free from the prejudices and fastidiousness which often accompany the consciousness of pedigree. He looked a gentleman with his striking, clear-cut, large-browed, melancholy face, and his handsome figure scrupulously, almost gorgeously, dressed, for he was something of a dandy; but his good taste and careless ease made his splendour natural and dignified. Once he was persuaded to take some tutorial work in college, but the experiment was not successful: he did not suffer fools gladly, as a college tutor must learn occasionally to do, and was reported to have got rid of troublesome pupils by strange methods, even to the upsetting of his tea-kettle over one who asked him too closely and persistently the meaning of "metaphysics." His quaint sayings were innumerable, not always suited to the place in which they were uttered: thus at the service in chapel which used to precede Fellowship elections, he was wont in the recitation of the *Te Deum* to respond audibly, "The goodly profits of the Fellowship." This

was before the days of agricultural depression. He was a formidable person if irritated by inexcusable ignorance or affectation, and punctured wind-bags somewhat ruthlessly, to the dismay, not unmingled with pleasure, of the company. But, like a gentleman as he was, he seldom exercised his dangerous powers, and then only on extreme provocation.

Whether an active life would have made him a happier man, and his great gifts more useful to society, it is impossible to tell. Perhaps the strain of London no less than the solitude of Oxford would have widened "the rift within the lute," for it is possible to become "queer" in London as well as in Salisbury Plain. It is probable that he was an illustration of the dangers of that doubtful blessing, a comfortable income secured to a young man for life,—a blessing doubly dangerous when to it is added the right to a home in a beautiful college in that most beautiful of cities, which has been to some a Capua.

The "idle Fellow," as Lord Salisbury called him, has ceased to be. Fellowships are now tenable for seven years only, and do not tempt a man to idleness, for the time is short. As in all changes there is a mixture of loss and gain, college life has lost something of the variety of old days, when every one was not a hard-worked lecturer or tutor. Whether resident or non-resident, the "idle Fellow" sometimes took wider views of things than his busy colleagues took, for he was more "disengaged." A non-resident Fellow especially, when he came to a college meeting, brought with him from London the welcome breath of a larger air than that of common-room. He enjoyed himself, and was the cause of en-

joyment to others; for though he may have felt himself a Rip Van Winkle among the wide-awake and advanced young thinkers, yet the wine was good, and the fire burnt brightly in common-room as of old, while the young men listened with at least the semblance of courtesy to the reminiscences of the fogey—for he was probably past forty, and seemed old to them; while some perhaps, if they were not inordinately youthful, were glad to hear of other experiences, other manners, than their own. Thus in Wadham the "non-residents" were always welcome: the writer may not speak of two such who are still living, but he may speak of Henry King and Hyman, who are now memories only.

King was a clubman and a scholar, who lived mainly in the "Garrick," partly in the library, partly in the whist-room. He was a barrister who had long ceased to tread the law-courts—like most lawyers, a strong Conservative, who at college meetings voted against all proposals without exception as meaning change, but disarmed resentment by his frank and humorous Toryism. His scholarship was of a type less common now than it was a century ago, when many English gentlemen and statesmen knew their Virgil and Horace by heart, and loved the classics for their literary charm, and wisdom, and applicability to life. He was fond, as such scholars are, of translating, and turned Ovid's 'Metamorphoses' into pretty English verse. To 'Maga' he was a frequent contributor, not only of prose articles but of very charming and graceful verses, both original and translations, and his initials, H. K., were very familiar to 'Maga's' readers. His humour was of the driest kind, good-

naturedly cynical—a wholesome discipline, though irritating, for young reformers, who could not brook opposition, and had not learnt the lesson which J. S. Mill at the India House found so difficult and valuable, that in this perverse world you must be content with as much of your own way as you can get.

Welcome too was Orlando Bridgman Hyman, in whose name there was something of the oddity and piquancy of the man. He was a classical scholar who might have rivalled Elmsley or Porson had he not been an “idle Fellow” with no incentive, no ambition. The accuracy of his knowledge was extraordinary, and it was no less varied than exact; for he was as familiar with Manilius and Nonnus as with Sophocles and Virgil. Athenæus and Lucian supplied him with a fund of stories which he found as amusing, and made to others as amusing, as the last London scandal, or *not* of Mr Labouchere. He had a strange, Jewish, wizened, sallow face, with black, bright, sparkling eyes, which twinkled with fun and malice as he half pleased, half shocked Warden Symons with stories which the old man relished more than he approved; stories with no harm in them, but a little too *risqués* for narration to an Evangelical digitary.

Hyman's short thin figure was clad always in a dress tail-coat, which gave him an old-world appearance, reminding one of Dr Jowett, or of the pictures of Beau Brummel and his friends—though the resemblance was confined to the high collar and necktie, tied however like one of Beau Brummel's “failures,” for Hyman was no dandy. Much solitude in London lodgings had made him retiring and reserved in manner

even with intimate friends; almost deferential, but in his deference there lurked a dangerous irony, for he had a keen sense of humour, and loved, like Socrates, to affect humility, and ask those innocent and awkward questions which best expose pretentious ignorance. He had the strange habits of a recluse: his closest friends were his dogs, with whom he might be seen walking on sunny mornings in Hyde Park, a curious company. He read innumerable books, and tore out the pages as he read them, for he thought few modern books worth reading twice. But despite his eccentricities his mind was sane and clear, and his shrewd common-sense made his judgment valuable in all practical matters, save the regulation of his own life.

There was something strange and melancholy in the funeral of the lonely scholar on a dreary afternoon at Kensal Green. A few old friends and pupils, and those of the Fellows of his college who were able to be present, attended it; and some, perhaps all of them, as they said *Vale* to their old comrade, thought with keen regret of his kindly cheery ways and his great gifts, to all appearance wasted—if waste in this strange universe there be. His curious learning departed with him: he wrote nothing—nothing, at least, that has been preserved. His name, like that of his brother Fellow and brother scholar Ross, has been “writ in water.” They died with “all their music in them,”—strange music, perhaps, it would have been, but worth hearing. Why is it that wit and learning are like oil and vinegar, and do not go together? Erasmus and Porson, and, in hardly less degree, Ross and Hyman, had both. Johnson and Mömmsen show that humour and erudition are compatible, but what

shall we say of——? Well—some things are best left unsaid.

Difficult as it is to give even a shadowy portrait of unknown men, the writer has made the attempt, because the class of which the persons described were specimens is vanishing and can "return no more." It is a class which used much to puzzle observant foreigners. To them a life-pension given in the name of learning to a lad of two-and-twenty, who was not bound to open a book or write a line during the half-century for which he might, and probably would, hold his Fellowship, seemed an absurdity; as foreigners euphemise it, an English anomaly. Nor indeed was it easy to explain to them precisely the position and functions of Heads of Houses. But many English anomalies work well. The system of idle Fellowships did a good thing in a round-about and clumsy wasteful way: it endowed not learning but ability, and opened to hundreds of distinguished men the road to wealth and honour and high public service.

And even the idlest of idle Fellows is sometimes missed by those who knew him, though they may not be able to justify their fond regret. But it would be hard to justify from one point of view the existence of a daisy in a meadow or a mountain flower: they, like the idle Fellow, have

their *raison d'être* in their restfulness and uselessness. "With joy the stars perform their shining," and what more of them ought you to require? They are beautiful, and it is a pleasure to behold them; so was it with some idle Fellows. Happy idleness is a charm which is fading out of modern life in this *fin de siècle*, when the aim of those even who are said to live for amusement is "to break the record." The term *fin de siècle* may have more meaning in it than Nordau thinks. It is probable that in the twentieth century the reaction will come, a new era will begin, and over-paced humanity will cease to regard ruthless competition as its natural and desirable condition.

But such speculations take us far away from a quiet old college.

Fain would the writer revive, even to a few and for an hour, the recollection of those men, now long dead, whom others as well as he remember with kindness or affection, who added to the charm and interest of their beautiful college the attraction of their own quaint and vigorous personalities. He feels moved to the attempt by that *necessitudo*, as the Romans called it—that compelling obligation of loyalty and friendship arising from colleagueship and common associations, which is happily an enduring quality of every Oxford college.

P. A. WRIGHT-HENDERSON.

FATE IN THE FACE.

READERS of 'Maga' will possibly recollect that in two articles on the Physiology of Expression published in 1894 and 1895,¹ an attempt was made to explain the manner in which habits of life and external circumstances tend to mould the features. When discussing Physiognomy with that object in view, very little was said of those inherent and congenital facial traits which we all possess, because it simplified the somewhat intricate problems as to the causes of acquired expression to regard the human countenance, for the time being, as so much passive material subjected to the shaping influences of environment. It is of course very evident that the human face, upon which time and circumstances produce so many remarkable changes, cannot fairly be compared to a blank canvas or a lump of sculptor's clay. Although the infantile countenance shows merely a generalised type (and from an anthropological point of view, a very primitive one), it cannot be considered even as a rough casting which is to be worked up by future external agencies. Innate hereditary tendencies, combined with certain strange natural laws of association between the character and the organic structure — which will be discussed later on — have a powerful voice in determining what manner of man a child will develop into.

These mysterious laws of association between the mind and the visible bodily structure afford a most interesting field for research,

and I shall offer no excuse for digressing freely in their direction whenever a chance offers of gaining a little new light by any such excursion from our chosen track.

It will be seen by all who are acquainted with the literature of Physiognomy that we are now about to approach the subject in much the same manner as has been done many times before. But instead of beginning with the postulates of some of the earlier writers, who have been content to declare that such and such a style of face is allied with such and such mental peculiarities, and have built their various superstructures on this empiric foundation, we will, whenever possible, endeavour to dig beneath these "first principles" and investigate the why and wherefore of the link. Thus it has many times been assumed (and with truth) that a certain type of nose is a sign of a pugnacious disposition, that another is an index of cunning, and so forth; but hitherto scarcely any attempt has been made to explain the reason of any such connection.

Now a little reflection will show that a definite correspondence of certain outward features with mental peculiarities is by no means confined to the face. The old classification of men by "temperament," although rather crude and unscientific, recognised the fact that the complexion and character are intimately associated. Nor need we confine ourselves to our own species alone in seeking evidence of this kind of relationship

¹ See 'Maga,' April 1894, "On Acquired Facial Expression"; and May 1895, "Trades and Faces."

between the skin and the soul. Chestnut horses are proverbially highly strung and hot tempered, especially if they have white markings on their heads and legs; and it has been stated that more than half the people bitten by dogs receive their injuries from black animals with curly hair. Breeders of shorthorn cattle assert that white cows with red ears are more excitable than red ones, while rat-catchers find that brown ferrets are both more courageous and less to be trusted than those of a light colour. A boyish experiment of my own showed that the same rule holds good with different coloured mice of the same parentage. I possessed a white female mouse, and a youthful friend was the owner of some which were piebald. Not wishing to be outdone, I purchased a black male from a dealer in such wares, in the hope that the cross would produce mice of the coveted colour. In this I was disappointed, for when the first litter—of six—arrived, three were black and three white, and like results occurred when the experiment was carried on to the fourth generation. These black mice not only had rounder forms and blunter noses than their relatives, but they differed from them also in disposition, being decidedly gentler and more phlegmatic. That the difference in constitution was as marked as those of colour and temper, was proved by a melancholy accident. One cold night I forgot to cover up the cages with a piece of felt carpet, and in the morning all the white mice were dead, but their black brethren, although drowsy, were no whit the worse.

These examples, which could be added to indefinitely, set us on the track of one explanation of the

observed correlation between features and character among mankind. This track will not lead us to the root of the matter, as will be seen presently, but it will at any rate take us to a point from which we can get a better survey of the ground.

The difference between the black and white mice was of course a racial one. The white were probably merely a variety of the common species, while the black male (according to the statement of the vendor) had been imported from Africa. Owing to one of those mysterious laws of natural inheritance—a law, by the way, which some of the modern writers on heredity seem to have insufficiently considered—the mongrel progeny in this instance showed no fusion of the two parent stems, but remained absolutely true either to one type or the other. Although the black mice of the third generation were half- or three-quarter-bred white ones, they remained in shape, in colour, in constitution, and in mental attributes, as black as their African ancestor. And in like manner, up to the frosty night which eliminated them, the whites showed no stain, either moral or physical, of that “splash of the tar-brush” with which they were all more or less freely bedaubed.

Without discussing this law of the persistence of type further than is necessary for present purposes, we may assert that the same phenomena, although in a less marked form, are observable amongst most animals, not excluding ourselves. Now mental characteristics are without doubt as much a product of environment as the texture and colour of the skin and the shape of the bones and sinews. A race of mice, or of

men, becomes moulded psychically as well as physically to fit the conditions under which it lives. Under some conditions of life a fierce and combative disposition is a *sine quâ non* of existence; under others meekness is the saving virtue. Hence the difference in character between a Bengalee and a Hillman, between a poodle and a wolf, between a coster's donkey and an onager.

In the case of the brown ferret above mentioned, any innate savageness of temper displayed is no doubt due to the fact that brown ferrets were first obtained by crossing the white domestic ferret with the polecat. Like the black and white mice, these two types remain distinct whenever the darker and lighter varieties interbreed; for in a resulting litter some of the young are brown and some white, and the peculiarities of temper appropriate to each remain constant from generation to generation. As in the case of the mice also, there is a marked difference in the power to bear a cold climate, for the "polecat ferrets" are found to be much hardier than the white. No doubt the fiercer and more robust brown ferret inherits these qualities from its fougart ancestor; but a white one of the same litter, although equally a direct heir of the polecat, inherits only the pigmentary poverty and the moral phlegm of the white race.

The black, curly-coated dogs which are said to be guilty of the majority of attacks on human beings are either retrievers or mongrels with a large admixture of retriever blood. Now retrievers of this type are all descendants of a cross with the Newfoundland dog, and the original Newfoundland (not the piebald "Landseer"

variety) was but little removed from the native "huskie," and therefore from the timber-wolf of North America. I have been informed that mongrels resulting from a cross between some European dogs, such as Scotch collies, and Esquimaux dogs, are often of a markedly treacherous disposition. If the indictment against the white cow be well founded, it seems not unlikely that she gets her restiveness and her colour from the same source—viz., from those wild white cattle which once roamed the European forests, the descendants of which now inhabit Chillingham Park.

It seems probable, therefore, that the chestnut horses with white markings and showing white in the sclerotic of the eye get their hot disposition from some ancient strain, either of wild desert steeds or of Eastern war-horses, all of which were coloured in this way, and whose surroundings made a courageous and impatient temper a necessity. There are various peculiarities among horses of this class which further support such a view; but perhaps enough has now been said to enable us to proceed with our argument concerning characters and faces.

It is a somewhat odd coincidence, and one which has, I believe, already been pointed out, that similar coloured hair in two creatures genealogically so far asunder as the horse and man stands for a sign of like peculiarities of temper in each. That it is nothing more than a chance coincidence there can be little doubt, for if we widen our field of analogy, and especially if we consider the enormous physiological gap between the two classes of rufous and hot-headed animals,

any likelihood of a more logical bond is diluted away to nothingness.

Probably there is no link between an ochreous complexion and a hasty temper in modern man other than a racial one. The two qualities were coincidentally developed by independent agencies. We know little of the nature and working of the forces which go to create a national type. That they are to some extent climatic and geographical is plain, for in New Zealand, Queensland, and North America we find the process in visible operation. Probably in the days of purely tribal savagery any peculiar attributes of the founder of a clan migrating away from his fellows would give the key, which external nature would develop and elaborate into a national characteristic. Such a pioneer, whether emigrant or outcast, would in most cases be a man of uncompromising temper and exceptional originality of mind; and, as is well known, these generally go with a physical peculiarity as strongly marked. Moreover, all barbarians are extremely intolerant of any bodily deformity or strangeness of aspect; and often a man, or a family, chancing to be offensively conspicuous in any such way, would be expelled from society. In Central America a hairy man was deemed an impossible outsider by the aborigines, while among the blacks of Western and Southern Africa an albino is always an outcast. These facts show how a new race might be developed from a "sport" which otherwise would be redissolved in the prevailing national traits.

Our red-haired Briton, from whatever source his peculiarities arose, is a descendant of some branch of the great Aryan family,

which found a peppery temper useful in the struggle for existence. That, although far removed from his original habitat and kindred, he retains the ancestral qualities in such an admirable state of preservation, is owing to the law of the persistence of types so strikingly exemplified in our horses, mice, and ferrets. Like these animals also, he is found to differ from his blood relations in constitution as well as in complexion, for it is well known that many red-haired people enjoy a special immunity from some forms of tropical fever.

Why the special qualities of some interbreeding races mingle and others do not, is a problem for the philosopher of the future. The difference does not depend upon the physiological degree of relationship, for most mulattoes show the parental traits of the whites and blacks fairly evenly divided, while an Anglo-Chinese mongrel is said, as a rule, to resemble one parent to the exclusion of the other. Among a mixed race, such as the British, a very large proportion of the marked differences of feature and complexion (not acquired during life) are owing to this indelibility of tribal types. Did each child represent an even mixture of its parents' qualities, we should, with a few exceptions due to the recent immigration of foreigners, be all as much alike as were the Caribs of the West Indies. Whatever may have been the original cause of the differences in outward type which we see in these islands, it is not so difficult to point out the agencies to which we owe our national character. From time immemorial the dwellers among the Irish bogs and the Frisian marshes, the Scandinavian, and the Highlander, have had to contend with a rigorous

climate and a barren soil, which made the struggle for life a very hard one. It was this stress, and not innate depravity of disposition, which sent the vikings to sea and the raiders across the Border, and made every fertile dale or snug estuary the scene of incessant bloodshed. A tribal separation rendered necessary in primitive times by the inhospitable nature of the country between such spots as were suitable for human habitation, engendered constant rivalry between each fierce clan and its neighbours. As iron sharpeneth iron, so did each sharpen the countenance of its foes. If one people happened to dwell in a fertile tract of country, they were not permitted to sink into soft ease, because their better fortune brought down upon them predatory hordes from less-favoured coasts. Whether our fathers were Norman, or Saxon, or Dane, or Celt, they had been through the mill. It is difficult to imagine any other method by which those national qualities of mind and body could have been evolved which have enabled the English-speaking people to dominate three-fourths of the globe.

No one will dispute the fact that there is, as a rule, a definite correspondence between the complexion and the general cast of the features; and it will therefore be seen that, in dealing at some length with the former subject, we have not been ignoring the aim with which we set out. But probably not every one has noticed that the whole body likewise yields evidence to the careful observer of the distinction between the more marked racial types with their corresponding traits of character. A friend, who is a most shrewd judge of mankind, recently remarked to me that he could recognise a Jew by

his gait and bodily contour quite as certainly as by his features.

Type shows itself in the bones, muscles, and viscera quite as much as in the skin; while from the power to bear cold or to escape disease enjoyed by some men and animals with marked racial peculiarities, it is evident that every tissue and cell in the organism shares in the distinction. Hence a skull tells its tale to the astute phrenologist (whose victims think, the while, that he is estimating their "organs"), and the hands to the adept who makes them, and their possessors, his special prey. Indeed there is no reason why enterprising specialists of the same kidney should not become "professors" of the art of reading fate in any part of the body to which their fancy might lead them.

If the question be asked, Why is this bond between the mind and the outward aspect, which was formed in some unknown fashion thousands of generations ago, maintained until the present day in spite of innumerable dilutions with alien blood, and a constant change in the external conditions of life? we can only answer that the mental attributes in question are as much an integral part of the type as is the pigment in the skin and hair.

When we reflect on the vast number of correspondences which can be observed to-day between the inherited qualities of mind and body, it is evident, if the above reasons suffice to explain the facts, that a vast number of races, very distinct in aspect and disposition, must have contributed to make modern British society. I see no reason to regard this as a difficulty when we take into account the innumerable primitive tribes yet existing which still show a very

distinct national temper. Moreover, we must recollect that for many generations a process of fusion has been going on among different races the whole world over. Some thousands of years ago, not only was the number of separate tribes much greater, but they retained their distinguishing characteristics much more than is the case to-day. But other factors may readily be admitted as contributing to the result as we behold it. The miscibility of racial traits, limited as it is, will doubtless account for some of the phenomena. A definite cross with men, as with domestic animals, will at times give a fairly constant result. Thus the malignant temper which has been remarked in the "Oafusos" (a cross between the Negro and Indian) of South America is traceable to the psychic peculiarities of neither race, but to an untoward mixture of those of the two.

But although the union of diverse races, each having a marked physical and mental individuality of its own, together with the laws regulating the fixity and miscibility of types, will account for some cases of inbred conformity between expression and mental habit, they will not carry us very far. Neither, as we have seen, do they lead us to the root of the matter and explain how such conformity is brought about. So far we have not advanced much beyond the older physiognomists; for we cannot give reasons why the dark man with fine straight hair is melancholy and sentimental, or the man with red and curly hair is cheerful and choleric, except by declaring that probably each is descended from some ancient tribe in which these same characteristics were uniformly associated. As to

how the connecting-link was forged in the first place, and as to its true physiological nature, we remain absolutely in the dark.

Now let us see if a wider survey of mankind will carry us any further than the study of the persistence of racial types. As yet we have not touched upon those instances of an inherent agreement between the face and the character which are practically common to all men of whatever nationality.

In examining evidence of this sort we must of course be careful to reject such habitual expressions as are merely due to the reaction of the mind upon the features, and which, therefore, are produced during the lifetime of the individual. Where the connection is one of cause and effect, it will not help us in our present inquiry, which is into the nature of the bond when both mental and bodily attributes have alike been inherited. Thus one man may be of a melancholy disposition and of a rueful countenance because his life has been soured by misfortune. His is plainly a very different case from that of another who has inherited both a lugubrious visage and a tearful temperament from his ancestors. It is not always easy, even when our phenomena are of the latter kind, to give them their true value, for most people, following a natural bent, adulterate their inherent characteristics with those which they acquire.

These and other difficulties of a kindred nature do not leave us many examples of the kind we want which are pure enough for purposes of analysis. We will, however, proceed to investigate such material as we have.

All the world over, a large and well-formed forehead is a fairly

good sign of intelligence. Here the link between the face and the character is of the simplest description. In the frontal part of the brain the more elaborate mental processes seem to be performed. Here also, probably, is the seat of the inhibitory centres which give us our power of self-control. A high and full forehead, therefore, means good accommodation for the higher mental machinery. The interior furnishing may not in all cases be on a par with the outside appearance, and, on the other hand, unusually efficient apparatus may be packed in a very unpretending chamber.

No feature of the human face is so sure an index of the mind as the eye. But here the very closeness and continuousness of the link so affects the result, that any coeval relation between the two is obscured. In fact, when one observes the eye in young children, and is able to watch the profound changes which age and experience bring, one is obliged to conclude that nearly all the noteworthy characteristics of ocular expression are secondary. A few, however, depending more on the surrounding structures than upon the eye itself, appear to be innate. Eyes placed a good distance apart are, all the world over, deemed a sign of an intelligent and straightforward character. Here the correspondence between the expression and the mind is again easy of explanation. When the orbits are capacious and widely separated the floor of the anterior portion of the skull is roomy, and there is plenty of space for the folds of grey matter which cover the frontal lobes. Conversely, people with eyes set close together are not usually thought to be of a liberal or ingenuous disposition; and

their defects may be owing to the "cabined, cribbed, confined" state of the fore-brain. Selfishness and knavery, it must be remembered, are, as a rule, merely the results of a limited mental outlook. Apart from defects in the emotional springs of conduct, people showing such traits act as they do because they simply have not wit enough to perceive that "honesty is the best policy," and that it is more profitable in the long-run to be open and generous than to be secretive and grasping.

As I hope, on some future occasion, to pass the various features of the human countenance in review, and to examine each in the light of the several principles discussed in this and previous articles on the *Physiology of Expression*, we will pass on to other phenomena which bear upon the question now before us.

In spite of the important place given to the nose as an index of character, there is but little to be learned from it in estimating the causes of an innate bond between the mind and the features. Most of the correspondences which have been remarked appear to be of a racial order; but why a Roman nose first became associated with a warlike and domineering disposition, or how a long and thin nose became linked with business shrewdness, is more than I can say. If we omit the changes which take place in a nose during the lifetime of its possessor, there is scarcely a nasal peculiarity of value to the physiognomist which at the same time is cosmopolitan. No Tartar or Hottentot, however warlike, could give proof of it in this way. Japan has shown that she possesses plenty of men with military aptitude, but no Wellingtonian nose can be found within

her borders. Again, no Chinese nose is long and thin, yet "John" is not without a certain aptitude at driving bargains.

The nose, as will be shown when we come to study it more in detail, is one of the most plastic of the organs of expression. Although the immutability of distinct racial types may to some extent account for the difference between an aristocratic and a plebeian nose, the constant reaction of the mind has a much greater influence than is generally imagined. Most so-called plebeian noses, broad across the nostrils and with a blunt and rather turned-up tip, are a sign of an uncultivated mental and moral nature. They are distinctly of a puerile type—noses, in fact, which, although always growing upwards, are never "grown up." The mental traits which we find commonly associated with a snub nose—good-nature, pertness, ignorance, and thoughtlessness—are simply the mental traits of immaturity continued into adult life. Nations among which noses of this description are the rule (with a few exceptions where the historic surroundings have been exceptional) are lacking in those mental and moral qualities which we deem a mark of the highest manhood. But the evidence afforded by our puerile nose, although it proves an innate tie between the face and the soul which is not entirely racial, merely tells us of a law of parallel development. The deed of partnership will now be generally admitted: what we wish to know is, How did it come about, and what were the prospective mutual benefits which led the contracting parties into taking this step?

As a rule, when endeavouring to analyse the more intricate ner-

vous phenomena in man, a great deal is gained by reducing the factors to their lowest terms. Thus, a problem which is so encumbered by the multiple complexities of civilisation as to be practically insoluble, is often found to be greatly clarified when the same facts are studied in the child or the savage. And, when this is found insufficient, it is occasionally worth while to continue the process of reduction and to transfer our attention to the ape. In the immediate question before us very little is gained by any such method, and the reason becomes obvious as soon as the attempt is made. In civilised men, savages, and anthropoids, the olfactory nerve (which is of course the chief connecting-link between the nose and the brain) plays a very small part in the struggle for existence; and, what is more, the shape of the external organ has no appreciable bearing on the sense of smell. Hence the nose, being relieved from the pressure of environment, is free to follow its own ideals. For, apart from frost and social prejudice, it does not matter twopence-halfpenny to the race what kind of nose a man has, or whether he has one at all. Irresponsibility and eccentricity go hand in hand all the world over.

But when we commence to study the part of the face beneath the nose, we find ourselves at once beset with many difficulties; and here the reduction process, if boldly used, will prove most helpful, and will reveal some curious results.

Let me remark, before going further, that any explanations of phenomena attempted (in all good faith) in this paper are merely hypothetical, and are not put forward as conclusive in the scien-

tific sense. It is one thing to say, "The facts, as far as we know them, seem to point to such a conclusion"; but it is quite another to declare, "This is my theory, and the true and only explanation of the phenomena!" The difference is not always appreciated by the public (as several modest investigators have found to their cost), and therefore it may not be inopportune to emphasise it by an illustration. In the one case you place a dish before a guest and say politely, "Kindly taste this, and tell me what you think of it," and, if you deem yourself a tolerable cook, you perhaps add, "I venture to think you will find it pretty good"; in the other case you adopt the less considerate method known to hospitality (in madhouses and on chicken-farms) as "forcible feeding."

There can be no question that character is more revealed in the mouth and lower jaw than in any other part of the face. For although we can judge neither of a man's intelligence nor of his morality with any degree of certitude if we omit the forehead, eyes, and nose, we can usually gauge his value as a social item more by the set of his lips and the shape of his jaw than by any other sign. Let him be ever so great a genius, or ever so holy a saint, if his mouth be weak and his chin retreating his mental and moral qualities will lack that motive force which is needful to render them of any great use either to himself or to society. Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton uttered a truism when he said, "I am certain that the great difference between men, the feeble and the powerful, the great and the insignificant, is in energy, in determination"; and it is in the lower jaw that this energy and de-

termination shows itself to the physiognomist.

But why? We eat with our jaws, and we wag them when we talk; yet neither eating nor wagging (of the ordinary sort) will make us great or powerful. The most ardent phrenologist could scarcely believe in a "will centre," or "organ," situate in the *inferior maxilla*—although such a theory would not be a whit more ludicrous, from an anatomist's point of view, than many which find a place in the text-books of the "science." The will is an integral part of the ego; and if a soldier had his lower jaw carried away by a shot, he would still be the same valiant and pigheaded Thomas Atkins. We are all of us aware that, when we exercise our wills, we brace and tighten our jaw-muscles at the same time. Even if the difficulty we determine to overcome be a moral one, the same involuntary change takes place in the countenance. What can be the character of this relationship, which seems so inseparable, between the jaw and the centres of consciousness within the skull? If we were to study modern man alone, whether as a living organism or with the aid of the scalpel and the microscope, we should find no glimmer of an answer.

Let us therefore (very briefly, for the argument cannot be fully set forth on this occasion) endeavour to simplify the problem by studying the jaw-functions in our nearest congeners. Here at once we find a clue to the solution. Among all Old World apes the teeth are the chief weapons for defence against natural foes and for combats for mates or tribal supremacy. The canines are in most cases enormously developed, inso-

have suggested that a near relationship must exist between the *primates* and the *carnivora*. As a matter of fact, these formidable teeth have nothing to do with alimentation, but are as purely weapons of war as are the bayonet and the Maxim gun. In practically every emergency demanding unusual energy, obstinacy, and courage, they come into play. In every conflict with the world, the flesh, and the devil—as such things are understood in pithecoïd society—the *temporal* and *masseter* muscles are the chief arbiters of war. To become a great and powerful anthropoid, it is absolutely and brutally necessary to have a large and strong jaw, to give firm attachment to the teeth and good leverage to the muscles. That for an immense epoch our pre-human ancestors achieved success in life in

like manner, is as clear as the print of 'Maga' to those who have learned to read Nature's handwriting. Since those days of true Arcadian simplicity our life has become bewilderingly complex, and our methods for settling social difficulties have changed—generally for the better. But here, as in so many other instances, the habits of a past age have left an indelible impress on the nervous system.

Nor is the link merely one of habit; for we find that a man, or a family, inheriting a tenacious, energetic, and combative disposition, inherits also a style of jaw allowing abundance of room for the canine teeth, with an angle enabling the great biting muscles to act with the fullest mechanical advantage.

LOUIS ROBINSON.

AN UNCROWNED KING.¹

A ROMANCE OF HIGH POLITICS.

CHAPTER XV.—TERMS OF ACCOMMODATION.

THE two months which had proved so eventful to Caerleon had been scarcely less so for Nadia, although her circumstances gave at first sight far less promise of excitement. Since leaving Bellaviste, the O'Malachy and his wife had been sojourning at the frontier village of Witska, and they seemed inclined to remain there, a thorn in the side of M. Drakovics, and this the more that he could not discover any motive, even that of initiating plots, for their doing so. His agents visited the village perpetually, both disguised and *in propria persona*, and after dogging the footsteps of the Herr Oberst and his wife for a longer or shorter time, and even making incursions into their rooms at the inn when they were out, returned to their employer baffled. In fact, there seemed nothing to observe. The "Kur" arrangements at Witska were more primitive even than those at Janoszwaz; but the O'Malachy drank the regulation number of tumblers of mineral water with unfaltering bravery, and took the prescribed stroll afterwards, accompanied by his wife, on the only piece of level road in the village, duly increasing the distance a little every day. The afternoon was invariably spent in the open air, in a sheltered spot at the foot of a blank wall belonging to the oldest part of the inn, Madame O'Malachy reading occasional extracts from one of the French novels which were her constant companions, and her husband responding

lazily with good-humoured criticisms. No life could have appeared more simple and innocent, or more entirely above-board. And yet, as Nadia could have told, although she judged more from various little indications than from any actual evidence, the worthy couple were all the time carrying on an extensive and complicated secret correspondence, and acting as intermediaries between those who disliked the present régime in Thracia and their Scythian sympathisers. An unexpected meeting with her mother early one morning showed Nadia that she was pale and heavy-eyed, as though from a long night-vigil, and the mystery was explained a few nights later when, hearing sounds in the house after midnight, and suspecting thieves, she equipped herself with great bravery for a search, and discovered both her father and mother still in their sitting-room, busy writing letters and destroying a number of papers which appeared to contain reports of some kind.

After this, Nadia kept her eyes open, and presently arrived at the conclusion that very few people came to the village, with the exception, of course, of the emissaries of M. Drakovics, who were not charged with messages of one kind or another for her parents. It was seldom that a letter came by post, or was openly delivered; but pedlars and travelling merchants, men wandering in search of work, and roaming gipsies, all seemed to have a secret under-

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standing with the O'Malachy and his wife. Sometimes an almost imperceptible sign would convey the needed information—sometimes, Nadia felt sure, letters were brought; but she never saw one presented, nor came on any trace of it afterwards. It was evident that any compromising papers were immediately and punctiliously burnt, and it was this precaution that baffled the men employed by M. Drakovics, who had no means of distinguishing between the ashes of a wood-fire and those of paper. Another curious fact which Nadia discovered, moreover, was the secret of the way in which her parents held their necessary consultations without attracting the attention of the spies by prolonged conferences, or wasting their working hours at night. Coming upon them one day in the sunny spot where they usually sat, she heard her mother, as she thought, reading aloud in French; but the first words that reached her ear scarcely sounded as though they were drawn from the novel on Madame O'Malachy's knee.

"You see what Louis says: 'Our friend X. has come over at last. His Majesty's promises were too tempting. He engages to bring all his employés with him when the time comes.' This despatch must be sent on immediately. It will show that we can depend on others beside the city guard. '*Adorable Erminie!*'" *s'écria Léonide, en se précipitant*——' What do you want, my daughter?"

It was some time before Nadia, having delivered the message with which she was charged from the landlord, and retired, lighted on the meaning of this curiously mingled sentence. It occurred to her in one of those flashes of comprehension which sometimes make clear to the mind a mystery long pondered over in vain, that the adven-

tures of Léonide and Erminie were only a blind, and that when Madame O'Malachy was supposed by those set to watch her to be reading to her husband in French, she was in reality discussing with him the progress of their schemes. No thought of profiting by this discovery to gain a knowledge of her parents' plans occurred to Nadia, for the idea of acting as a spy would have been abhorrent to her; and even had she been anxious to probe more deeply into the mystery of M. X. and his employés, her father and mother kept their secrets from her as carefully as from the Thracian police-agents themselves. If the subject of Thracia was mentioned when she was with them, it was merely as the text of a bantering discourse, more or less good-humoured on the O'Malachy's part, but bitterly reproachful on that of his wife. They could not forgive Nadia for her folly in refusing an offer the acceptance of which would have raised the whole family to affluence and distinction, although Madame O'Malachy resented much more strongly than her husband the loss of the benefits promised by the match. His easy-going nature accepted calmly enough the change in the position of affairs, and the necessity of plotting against the man he had hoped to regard as his son-in-law; but both he and his wife guarded carefully against giving Nadia any inkling of the possible consequences to Thracia and its king of her refusal. Although they never engaged in their work of correspondence until she was out of the way, they did not risk stimulating her curiosity by showing any eagerness to get rid of her, allowing her to join them or not just as she pleased. But the certainty of finding herself either reproached or laughed at for her foolish mismanagement of what

Madame O'Malachy called "*l'affaire Carlino*" made her anxious only to shun their society; and during the first few days of their stay at Witska she moped about the garden alone, with nothing to do but think of the past, and feeling that she had nothing in the whole world to which to look forward. Under these circumstances it is not surprising that she caught herself one day longing fervently that it had been right for her not to end matters between herself and Caerleon so absolutely as she had done, but the discovery surprised and shocked her very much.

"All my life I have been preparing to make a stand at some great crisis," she said to herself; "and now that it has come, I am giving way. I must find something to do. Of what use is it to train myself to be a martyr, if I cannot bear a week's loneliness?"

She summoned all her resolution to enable her to meet this unexpected demand, and reviewed the situation. With mingled horror and shame she realised that she had been waiting on, with the vague thought in her mind that it was scarcely worth while to take up any settled work, owing to a half hope, never formulated nor even guessed at, but still undoubtedly there, that something might happen to set things right and render her sacrifice unnecessary. That she could be false to herself in this way was a bitter disappointment to her, and she burned wildly to place her determination beyond the possibility of change. As a first step in the desired direction, she wrote a long letter to Princess Soudaroff, the godmother in whose house she had been brought up, and of whom she had spoken so much to Caerleon on their first meeting. Her letters had been somewhat short and su-

perficial of late, she knew, telling all the trivial pieces of news she could find, but never touching on the important subject which had engrossed the minds of her parents from the time of their first sight of Caerleon to her parting from him at Bellaviste. It is true that both Caerleon and Cyril had found a casual mention in the earlier letters written from Janoszwaz; but as time went on both names, and especially that of the elder brother, had dropped out of sight in a way which would have caused some idea of the truth to enter most women's minds, but the Princess was not by nature suspicious. Nadia's heart smote her now for her reticence, and she detailed the whole course of the affair to the Princess, suppressing only two material facts,—the name of her lover—this was out of anxiety to behave fairly to Caerleon,—and, as a natural corollary, her real reason for refusing him. It must be confessed that she was not altogether sorry not to lay the whole of the facts before her godmother, for her eagerness to place her resolution beyond recall was great; and although the Princess was very sympathetic in cases of conscience, she had a habit of looking at things differently from any one else, and Nadia had a lurking suspicion that she might tell her she had acted hastily, and ought to have asked advice. And this was what her own conscience hinted to her many times a-day. At Bellaviste, before she had given her final answer to Caerleon, she had been upheld by the expectation that when she had done so, the consciousness of a right action unflinchingly performed would bring her peace, if not happiness; but both qualities were now conspicuous in her mind by their absence, and she began to doubt whether a preconceived certainty as to the

goodness of the deed might not have blinded her as to its real character—a doubt which, the more remorselessly she crushed it down, returned the more to make her wretched.

Her duty to her godmother performed, and her determination proved beyond dispute, Nadia told herself that her lack of occupation had undoubtedly made it easier for her to fail in her resolution, and she set to work to correct this. She would no longer remain all day in the inn garden, but go out into the village and try to make friends with the people. She could not at first speak their language, nor they hers; but her interest in the children won her a way into the hearts of the women, and she discovered, much to her surprise, that when a child was sick or hurt she could do more for it than any one else in Witska. In time of health the little ones found her rather solemn and unapproachable, for although she longed to make friends with them, she was not one of those who can throw themselves heart and soul into children's interests and occupations; but when they were ill the experience she had gained in Princess Soudaroff's cottage-hospital stood her in good stead. The nurses there had been wont to laugh at her as slow and clumsy; but here, where there was no one to keep a critical eye upon her, she succeeded in putting in practice the lessons she had learned. One or two cases of recovery from severe illness, which seemed miraculous to the villagers, but which were really due to patient nursing and modern methods of treatment, spread her fame abroad, and appeals began to reach her from outlying hamlets and solitary huts, entreating her to pay a visit to some sick child. When these requests were translated to her by the cosmopolitan waiter, she had no hesi-

tation in complying with them, for they promised fresh work, and work was what she wanted. A wild longing had come upon her to see Caerleon's face again, to hear his pleasant voice, to meet the glance, half puzzled, half amused, which he would cast at her when she had said anything that startled him. The strength of her own feelings alarmed her. She felt that she would almost volunteer to go to Bellaviste as a spy, if only it would enable her to catch a glimpse of him; that she would be willing to meet the doom which Thracia kept for Scythian spies, if only she had seen him first. And therefore she welcomed the calls which came to her to take long mountain-walks and seek out distant families where a child lay ill, because the exertion of the day brought her back at night so tired that she was glad to go to bed and sleep the sleep of utter exhaustion. At first her long excursions drew upon her some opposition from her father.

"Sure it's not the thing," he said, "for a young lady to be roaming about alone like this. I won't allow it."

"What would you have, O'Malley?" asked his wife, scornfully. "Can we afford to engage a retinue to attend upon a girl who might be Queen of Thracia if she liked, and will not? Nothing will happen to her. She is a failure."

Left to her own devices, even in this unflattering way, Nadia gladly pursued her lonely walks, attended only by one of the great dogs which were kept to protect the flocks from the wolves, and which had attached himself to her. She saw no trace of the smugglers and outlaws of whom vague tales were current in the village; but one very real terror beset her at times, of which she said nothing at home. It became gradually evident to her

that her proceedings were watched. She would find herself tracked by pursuers of whom she could only by stratagem obtain a glimpse; and when she had learned to speak the language a little, she would hear at the cottages she visited that a stranger had been there since she came last, making inquiries as to the gracious lady and her doings. At first she was at a loss to imagine who could think her sufficiently important to dog her steps in this way; but presently it dawned upon her that M. Drakovics, who could not be persuaded that she was not engaged in a conspiracy against Caerleon, had instructed his emissaries to keep an eye on her. This solution of the mystery satisfied herself; and as no one else had noticed anything unusual, she was not obliged to parry the remarks of others. The shepherds warned her to be careful, and not to stray from the beaten track, lest she should run into danger; but she knew that the wolves were not likely to venture from their fastnesses as yet, and, moreover, her mother's words echoed bitterly in her ears. Nothing would happen to her, or, if it did, it would not signify. She was a failure. And yet, while her heart sank lower, her determination only became stronger. If she could bring Caerleon back to her with a word, she would not utter it, to ruin him and his kingdom. What he had called her mania for martyrdom was still strong upon her, and the more she longed to reverse her decision the more unflinching she crushed down the pain.

But there was a harder battle in store for her than the fight she fought daily with herself, and it came to her when she was weakest. The news had just reached her of the initiation of the temperance legislation which she had pressed

upon Caerleon, and it brought back to her mind his forecast of the difficulties of the work, and his appeal to her to help him in it. Then she had received a letter from her god-mother, overflowing with kindness, but containing a little gentle chiding.

"Why should you not be more frank with me, my child?" the Princess wrote. "Surely you know that if in any way I could help you, it would be my delight to do so, and yet you leave me to receive through a stranger an appeal on your behalf. I had a visitor this morning in the shape of Madame Bourenine, whom you know by name as the confidante of the Empress. She said that she had come to talk to me about the love-affair of Nadia Mikhailovna, but she mentioned no other names. Nor did I, for I knew none. After some conversation leading to nothing in particular, she inquired at last whether, if the obstacles to your marriage could be removed, I should be willing to give it my sanction. Knowing only that you had felt it your duty to refuse your lover, what could I say but that if you thought it right to marry him I should be delighted to help you in any way I could? After this, she left me, apparently satisfied. But, my child, have I deserved to be treated in such a way? Why should Madame Bourenine know more of your affairs than I? I do not ask for your confidence if you feel it right to withhold it, but I pray you to understand that no one on earth can desire your happiness and your best good more than I. I commit you to God's keeping, dear child."

The receipt of this letter sent Nadia on her mountain expedition the morning of its arrival with her

head in a whirl. Who could the persons be that were interesting themselves in the state of affairs between her and Caerleon, and why were they doing so? She puzzled over these questions in vain as she walked; but when she returned, rather earlier than usual, she found that they were destined to a speedy solution. Entering the sitting-room, she was surprised to see a stranger talking to her parents,—a smooth and polished gentleman, with a highly waxed moustache. A conviction that she had seen him somewhere before came over her as she paused just inside the door.

"And this is mademoiselle!" said the stranger, an almost imperceptible smile curling the ends of his moustache as he saw her standing erect and astonished in the doorway, with her plain tweed dress muddy and tumbled, and her hair blown about by the wind.

"Yes, M. le Prince, it is my daughter," said Madame O'Malachy, and Nadia noticed a repressed excitement in her manner. "Nadia, Vladimir Alexandrovitch has been so good as to pay us a visit here on his return journey from Czarigrad to Pavelsburg, entirely on your account."

"Mademoiselle and I are not wholly unknown to each other," said the visitor. "At one time I had the felicity of meeting her tolerably often at my sister-in-law's house. If she does me the honour to remember me, she may recollect that even in those days I ventured to prophesy that she would be a beautiful woman; but I was not fortunate enough to discern that her *beaux yeux* would exercise an influence on the history of Europe."

Nadia's brow grew stormy. She remembered now the elegant young man who had been wont to torment with compliments and caresses the shy, passionate little girl who fol-

lowed his sister-in-law everywhere, and her relief when circumstances had removed him from her neighbourhood. There was not much intercourse nowadays between Princess Soudaroff and her brother-in-law, although the relations between them were perfectly friendly. The present Prince was not a member of the Cercle Evangélique.

"I fear I am an unfortunate messenger," he went on, with a covert smile, as he noticed the change in Nadia's expression. "I have set mademoiselle against me already. But I would ask her to believe that I am here purely in the hope of being able to render some service to her and to the gentleman who is so happy as to possess her heart."

"How dare you say that?" cried Nadia, angrily.

"I beg your pardon, mademoiselle. I remember that in the old days you used to prefer plain speaking to polite circumlocutions, and as only your own family are present, I will venture to come to the point at once. It cannot, surely, be a secret here that, with a generosity which does you infinite credit, you have declined the addresses of the person who now holds the throne of Thracia, lest a marriage with you should prejudice his future?"

"I have not told you anything of the kind," said Nadia, sharply, "and I am sure the King of Thracia did not. I cannot tell how you have found it out."

"Ah, these wicked newspapers!" sighed the Prince, smiling gently at Nadia's unintentional admission, "they tell everything. But if you assure me that they have been misinformed, mademoiselle, I can only resign the hope of serving you which has brought me here, and depart, regretting to have troubled you."

"They were not misinformed. It is quite true," said Nadia, bluntly.

"So I imagined, mademoiselle. I felt convinced that such a magnificent self-renunciation could not be merely a creation of fancy. But there is no reason," he went on quickly, as she rejected his praise with a contemptuous gesture, "why you should object to your admirable conduct becoming known. It has won you friends all over Europe, and I may mention that in Scythia persons in a very high position have been much pleased with the delicacy which you showed under extremely trying circumstances, and have even been led to wonder whether it might not be possible to avert the difficulties which you feared might result from your marriage. Pray sit down, mademoiselle,"—he rose and handed her his chair, which she accepted mechanically, for her limbs were trembling so violently that she could scarcely stand,—“and let us consider the matter. Pauline Vassilievna, my sister-in-law, has been appealed to, and she testifies the greatest eagerness to assist in bringing affairs to a happy conclusion. I take it for granted that the only obstacle to a marriage between Lord Caerleon and yourself lay in these honourable scruples of yours?”

Nadia nodded silently, and he went on, watching her as a cat might watch a mouse.

"The first difficulty lay, no doubt, in the difference of position? Well, I do not deny that between Nadia Mikhailovna and the King of Thracia there is a serious gap; but it is not too deep to be filled up. We cannot hope to restore the ancient regal glories of your father's house," he smiled indulgently, "but his Majesty the Emperor has long entertained the desire of conferring on my good friend Colonel O'Mal-

achy a patent of nobility, in recognition of his meritorious services; and between Lord Caerleon and the Countess Nadia, daughter of Count O'Malachy de Lisnacoola, there is no very great disparity of rank."

"But Carlino is King of Thracia," Nadia managed to say.

"Pardon me—he calls himself so, but he has merely usurped the throne. He cannot be king without the consent of the Powers, and of Roum, the suzerain State. His so-called election is simply the work of an ignorant peasantry, led on by irresponsible agitators. The present condition of Thracia is a standing menace to European peace, and cannot be suffered to continue. If this errand with which I am charged fails to bring about a settlement, Lord Caerleon must fall. He is merely an adventurer, a land-pirate."

"But," urged Nadia, more to gain time than for any other reason, "if this patent of nobility is to be a reward for my father's services, why not grant it to him in any case?"

"Sure that's the most sensible thing I've ever heard you say, Nadia," exclaimed the O'Malachy, with hearty approval, while Prince Soudaroff looked a little nonplussed.

"You forget, mademoiselle, that the conferring of the patent would involve in this instance a grant of estates sufficient for the maintenance of the title, such as it would be invidious to present to an officer of Colonel O'Malachy's standing in an isolated case, unless for very special reasons. But not only are those whom I represent willing to aid you in this way,—I am authorised to promise further that the Scythian ambassador at Czarigrad will be instructed, if the marriage takes place, to support the Thracian

claim for the confirmation by Roum of Lord Caerleon's election as king. The bride will thus have the satisfaction of bringing not only happiness to her husband, but peace and security to Thracia."

"Only the confirmation of King Carlino's election? Not the recognition of the right of the Thracians to elect their own king?"

"Certainly not, mademoiselle. Roum would be unable to grant such a recognition without the consent of the Powers, which would not be given."

"I can quite believe it. And now, M. le Prince, I know that in the political world nothing goes for nothing. What is the price to be paid for this kindness?"

"Nadia!" cried her mother. "I am grieved—astonished——"

"Madame," said the Prince, with a deprecating wave of his hand, "I came on this errand expecting to be misunderstood. There are no conditions attached to his Majesty's favours, mademoiselle. He gives without any desire of receiving in return. I do not say that he does not look for gratitude. His heart is so tender that even years of ruling and much bitter experience have not hardened it. He may well expect some little attention to his wishes, some slight concessions on the part of those who will owe so much to him; but that is all."

"Ah!" said Nadia, sharply. "And what are these concessions?"

"They are so slight, mademoiselle, that his Majesty is quite content to leave them out of sight until matters are as happily arranged as you can desire—in other words, until your marriage with Lord Caerleon has taken place. At such a time a man of generous impulses, as I understand this unfortunately misguided nobleman to be, would be only anxious to consult with his bride as to the means

by which he might testify a portion of his gratitude to the potentate to whom he owed his happiness."

"I see," said Nadia, crimson but persistent. "And my part would be to suggest that these concessions should be made, as signs of our joint gratitude to the Emperor. But I must know something more about them. It would be impossible for me to recommend them to the King unless I knew what they were."

"They are so slight, mademoiselle, as scarcely to be called concessions, —merely a graceful acknowledgment of the Emperor's kindness. Until this unhappy revolution occurred, the connection was so close between Scythia and Thracia that there will be nothing strange in returning to the custom by which in all matters of foreign policy the advice tendered by Scythia was followed by the Thracian Government. Again, Scythia bore such a prominent part in organising the Thracian kingdom and in training the army that to appoint a Scythian officer as Minister of War would cause no surprise, and seem only natural."

"Ah!" said Nadia again, "and that is not all?"

"It is evident, mademoiselle, that while the present Ministry is in power in Thracia, the Emperor cannot feel towards that country the cordiality he would wish. It is to the interest of the Cabinet at present in office to oppose any attempt at a reconciliation with Scythia, simply because their position depends upon their maintaining a hostile attitude. But the matter will right itself. When the King shows his gratitude and confidence towards Scythia in the two ways I have indicated, the Drakovics Ministry cannot remain in office. M. Drakovics will appeal to the country, and the King, assisted, if necessary, by Scythia, will obtain by means of a general elec-

tion a more serviceable Government."

"By means of compulsion and forged voting-papers, I suppose," said Nadia. She had no reason to feel any special love for M. Drakovics; but he was an honest man and a patriot, and wished to do what seemed to him to be best both for Caerleon and Thracia. She rose from her chair, and spoke wearily: "I am sorry that I could not advise the King to accept your conditions, M. le Prince."

"There are no conditions, mademoiselle. What is desired is merely an honourable understanding that you will influence Lord Caerleon in this direction."

"And into that understanding I cannot enter. I will not help to thrust the Thracians back into the bondage from which the revolution freed them. I will never advise the King to take the steps you propose, and I hope and believe that he would decline them if I did."

"Nadia, you are mad!" cried Madame O'Malachy, shrilly. "If you care nothing for your lover, will not the thought of your family move you? Our old age and your brother's future would be secured by your accepting the kindness you scorn."

"It is possible that on consideration mademoiselle may change her mind," said Prince Soudaroff, looking calmly through his papers. "His Majesty's offer will remain open for a week. But I cannot advise her to delay. We have only to seek a *rapprochement* with Pannonia, and secure her opposition, instead of her neutrality, to the negotiations at Czarigrad, and the fate of Lord Caerleon and his 'kingdom' is sealed. Thracia is honey-combed with disaffection, and a failure in foreign policy will precipitate matters. One more thought,

mademoiselle. I told you just now that Lord Caerleon was a land-pirate. Have you recollected what is the fate of a captured pirate?"

"I had rather see him dead than saved by betraying the nation that trusted him," said Nadia, stoutly. No harassing doubts assailed her now. This offer could not but be refused.

"And just this," the Prince went on, not heeding her words. "Lord Caerleon is only a man; and we men are not angels in constancy. Your refusal has made him miserable, it is true; but this state of mind will not last. You have wounded his self-esteem; you have shown him that there are certain things you love better than you love him. It does not signify that these things are the highest and most honourable sentiments—he must be a very unusual man who would endure to see them preferred to himself. And Lord Caerleon is not an unusual man; he is simply a young Englishman, half child and half barbarian, whose idea is that when he wants a thing he must have it. You have injured him, and very soon his one anxiety will be to punish you. I happen to know that M. Drakovics, his Minister, is straining every nerve to obtain for him the hand of some princess of a royal house. There is still time to win him back, for he loves you at present, in spite of the way in which you have treated him. But if you delay only a very few days you may be too late. Owing to your own cruelty, you may see your lover urged into a marriage with another woman, whom he does not love, but whom he is willing to accept in order to punish you. Or perhaps," with a smile, "you may see him marrying joyfully—who shall say?—some royal lady who has captivated his heart,

which was at your disposal if you would have received it, but cannot endure your coldness."

"I can't help it!" cried Nadia, trembling from head to foot. "If I could withstand him, do you think I will listen to you? He is quite right to marry some one else; I told him to do it. Ah! if you wanted me to give way, you should have brought him here; but you would never dare to utter to his face the horrible lies you tell of

him behind his back. I can only thank you for not putting me to the test."

"Is it quite impossible?" asked the O'Malachy, as she closed the door unsteadily behind her.

"Quite," returned his wife. "Drakovics and Milord Cyril watch over him night and day. Nothing reaches him but through them."

"Yes," rejoined Prince Soudaroff, meditatively. "I fear King Carlino has had his last chance."

CHAPTER XVI.—WORDS FROM DYING LIPS.

Prince Soudaroff left Witska that afternoon, and the week slipped away, but no message was sent to recall him or to accept the offer with which he was charged. If this mortified him, he must have felt himself avenged a little later, when both his auguries of evil proved true. The first hint of coming ill reached Nadia one morning when, as she came into the sitting-room, her mother threw a newspaper to her.

"Now I hope you are happy!" she said. "You have succeeded in ruining Thracia and your Carlino."

Nadia took up the paper, a German one, and read the piece of news which figured in it most prominently. It announced the *rapprochement* which had taken place between the Emperors of Scythia and Pannonia, and the subsequent refusal by the Roumi Government to confirm Caerleon's election—the two events which had plunged Cyril and M. Drakovics into their complicated intrigues with Mœsia. At present, of course, nothing was known of these negotiations, and the paper only reflected the general opinion when it remarked that the cause of Thracia was already lost. Cyril was still an unknown quantity in Balkan poli-

tics; and although most people were acquainted with the resourcefulness and strength of will of M. Drakovics, they could not conceive it possible that even he could devise any means of tiding over such a crisis as this. Nadia could not dissent from the opinion advanced; but the hand which held the paper did not tremble as she read through the announcement and the editorial comments on it, and she looked up unflinching at her mother.

"I had rather that he should fall honourably than reign a pensioner of Scythia," she said.

"You are a fool!" was Madame O'Malachy's only answer. "Go and look after your sick brats. It is all you are fit for."

But three or four days later she came into Nadia's room early in the morning with a face in which rage and triumph were mingled.

"You have indeed done well for yourself, mademoiselle!" she said, putting her hand on her daughter's shoulder and shaking her. "Your Carlino is to marry the Princess Ottilie of Mœsia. The betrothal is to take place next week."

"It is not true!" cried Nadia, starting up in bed.

"It is most true. You are caught at last, are you? This, then, is

your faithful, your constant lover! He assures you of his undying affection, and six weeks later he betroths himself to another."

"He is quite right," said Nadia, recollecting herself. "I told him to do it."

"Indeed! But you never thought he would," said Madame O'Malachy, putting down her candle and gazing with cruel certainty into her daughter's pale face. "Don't speak to me, mademoiselle. You might try to impose on Prince Soudaroff with your exalted generosity, but you felt confident that Carlino would remain faithful to you. However, I may tell you this for your comfort. Your father has always believed hitherto that Carlino would refuse to accept his dismissal as final, and would try his fate again in time. But now, if he meets him he will kill him."

"Why?" asked Nadia, as calmly as she could. "He is only obeying me."

"Why!" cried her mother. "Because he has insulted us, played with us, made us the laughing-stock of Europe. Although you may be a fool, your father can avenge the honour of his house, and he will do it. You refused to share the Thracian throne; but it is Carlino who has put it out of his own power to offer it to you a second time, and for this he must pay. In every way we are undone. Not only have we lost the position we might have held in Thracia, but this marriage will endanger all our plans in Europe."

"Ah!" cried Nadia, assuming a sudden interest in politics to divert from herself the gaze of her mother's glittering eyes, "it was this marriage that Vladimir Alexandrovitch was anxious to prevent. He foresaw it, and he knew that it would bring Pannonia to the help of King Carlino. Thracia is saved, then!"

"Yes; and you——?" asked Madame O'Malachy, with her most cruel smile, as she retired from the room, half baffled by her daughter's calmness, but certain that she left a sting behind her. And indeed her words were true. Although Nadia had succeeded in making herself believe that she was desirous Caerleon should follow the advice she had given him, she discovered now that she had never expected him to do so. She had found an unspeakable comfort in the remembrance of the indignant rebuke with which he had answered her when she told him that, loving her, it was his duty to marry another woman; and now her sorrow was less for the fact that she was herself forsaken than that her lover had proved unstable. He had failed in faith; he was fearless and stainless no more. Well, it was better so, no doubt. He was hers no longer, he had not been hers since they parted at Bellaviste; and if he was no more the blameless knight she had imagined him, at least he was a wise king, and was preparing to take the only step which seemed able to save his kingdom in the present crisis. Undoubtedly it was better so. But Nadia's heart rose up in rebellion against this view of the case, and all day, as she followed the mountain-paths, or moved about in the hut in which lay the sick child she was visiting, she was mourning silently a trust betrayed, a high ideal shattered. It was her own fault, she knew; she had told him to forget her, but she had illogically expected him to disobey, and looked for him to be stronger morally than she was.

But after a day or two there came other things to trouble her. It was known by this time that there was a difference of opinion between Scythia and Pannonia on the subject of Thracia, and that in all

probability the interposition of Pannonia, supported by her allies, at Czarigrad, would obtain a settlement of affairs in Caerleon's favour. This stimulated the activity of the Thracian conspirators, who, whether at home or in exile, had been lying low for a week or so and watching the course of events, but who now realised that they could not look to the Powers to do their business for them. The O'Malachy and his wife began to be extremely busy, much to the alarm of Nadia, who felt certain that some blow was to be attempted against the Thracian kingdom, but could not fathom its nature. One day the O'Malachy left Witska on urgent business, and she gathered that he had gone to Pavelsburg, though what his errand there was she could only guess. Nor were her anxieties allayed by her finding her mother one day reading with much agitation a paper which had just arrived by the post.

"There seems to be no end to the trouble you bring upon us, Nadia," said Madame O'Malachy. "As if your foolishness was not enough, your father must needs go and improve upon it for the benefit of the newspapers. It must have been after dinner, I suppose, as usual. No doubt they came round him and drank wine with him, and flattered him and sympathised with him, until he was ready to tell them anything. I cannot trust him alone for a day, and yet I must stay here. Pig! ass! why does he not see that in making this pitiful story he forgets that Louis is in Bellaviste, in the Palace itself, and must stay there?"

"What has my father been saying?" asked Nadia, turning pale.

"Merely parading you before the eyes of Europe as a forsaken heroine," replied Madame O'Malachy, tearing the offending newspaper

briskly across, and throwing the fragments into the stove; "but I will stop that. Give me those telegraph-forms."

Nadia obeyed, wondering at her mother's unwontedly conciliatory manner, for she consulted her as to the wording of the telegram which was to warn the O'Malachy not to repeat his indiscretion, but to maintain a strict silence on the subject of his daughter in future; and when the message was at last written, after several forms had been wasted, she was sent to the post-office with it. Madame O'Malachy did not breathe freely until her daughter had departed, and, as soon as she had time to think, she resolved mentally to seize any papers other than merely local ones which might enter the house, and destroy them before Nadia could see them. She felt that this measure was imperatively necessary, if there was to be any peace in the family; for even her resolute heart quailed before the thought of the scene which would ensue if Nadia discovered the construction which the O'Malachy, or the reporters of his words, had placed upon Caerleon's treatment of her. To Madame O'Malachy, with her strong common-sense, the temperament which could lead her husband to boast of the long-past glories of his race, while he did his best at the same time to proclaim that his daughter had been most cruelly jilted, was incomparably absurd, and the telegram she sent him was short and sharp. The injury inflicted upon Nadia by the publication of such a report as he had set on foot appealed to her keenly, for all her hopes for old age were based upon the necessity of her daughter's making a brilliant marriage; and to have her name bandied about in such a connection could not but militate against her prospects.

Trouble of this kind she could understand and sympathise with, while Nadia's refusal of Caerleon and its reasons were a sealed book to her, and she was almost kind to the girl during that day and the next. But on the second evening her sympathy seemed to be exhausted, for her manner became once more brusque and her tone sarcastic, and Nadia, who had been feeling more cheered by the change in her mother than she would have thought possible, realised that her presence was no longer desired in the sitting-room. A sudden impulse made her pause by the table at which Madame O'Malachy was busied with her writing materials as she passed her on her way to her room.

"If you are planning anything against *him*, spare him for my sake," she said in a low voice, and stopped, amazed at her own temerity.

"Go to bed; you are a little fool," returned her mother, scathingly.

Nadia's sleep was disturbed that night. Two or three times she thought she heard stealthy steps in the passage, and once the unmistakable sound of the shutting of a door. The idea was strong in her mind that some deadly blow was being prepared against Caerleon, and she lay awake trembling and listening. She cried herself to sleep at last, and was only awakened in the morning by a voice at her door.

"Fräulein! Fräulein!"—the agitated accents were those of the many-tongued waiter,—*"pray come down at once. The gracious Frau Oberstin has met with an accident. Boris the cowherd found her on the hillside just now, and they are bringing her in."*

Startled and horrified, Nadia threw on a dressing-gown, and rushed down-stairs. The passage

was filled with the hangers-on of the inn, who made room for her to pass into one of the smaller rooms on the ground-floor, into which had just been carried on a stretcher a figure wearing the dress of the country-people. Nadia looked round amazed. This was a peasant woman, not her mother. But from the motionless form came a well-known voice.

"You need not look so frightened, my daughter. I am not injured, merely too stiff too move. Absolutely I cannot stir a foot. It is evident that I have been walking in my sleep again. You remember that it is an old fault of mine? I suppose you must send for a doctor, for form's sake, but pray do not alarm any one."

It appeared that there was a doctor to be found at a little town some miles off, and a messenger was despatched at once to bring him to Witska, while Nadia did her best to make her mother comfortable. Assisted by an excited maid-servant, who insisted on relating in bad German how she had chanced, some weeks before, to meet the Frau Oberstin coming along the balcony at night with a candle in her hand and a fixed look in her eyes, she brought down a bedstead from one of the upper rooms, and succeeded in moving Madame O'Malachy to it, the sufferer still protesting that she felt no pain whatever, merely an inability to move. Nadia's mind was busy with the problem presented by the accident. If her mother had only been walking in her sleep, how had it happened that she had laid aside her own dress in favour of the peasant costume? The place where she had been found was at the foot of a precipitous incline on which abutted one of the walls of the garden belonging to the inn. Between the wall and the edge of the steep was a narrow ledge, affording

just room for a sure-footed person to pass along it. It was unlikely that a sleep-walker would light on this track for the first time; but any one bound on secret or important business would find it an excellent means of reaching the road down the mountain without being seen from the village. Was it possible that Madame O'Malachy had been carrying despatches in disguise when a chance slip had made her lose her footing?

This was the question which, try as she would, Nadia could not banish from her mind during the earlier part of the day, but when the doctor arrived he gave a new direction to her thoughts. He was a taciturn man, and asked so few questions that Madame O'Malachy set him down as a fool; but when his examination was over he made a sign to Nadia to accompany him out of the room.

"Where is the Herr Oberst?" he asked. "I understand from the landlord that he is away."

"I think he is in Scythia," answered Nadia. "He went to Pavelsburg on important business, but I do not know whether he is still there."

"He must be summoned at once," said the doctor.

"But he will return in a few days," said Nadia, astonished. "You don't wish me to telegraph to him? That would seem as if my mother were dangerously ill——"

"Yes?" said the doctor, with an intonation that made her start and shiver.

"But she is not even severely hurt! She has absolutely no pain!" she cried, frantically.

"That is the worst symptom," he replied, in his most repressive and business-like tone. "She is suffering from paralysis, caused by——" And he entered into a

learned disquisition on the exact nature of the injury sustained, culminating in the fact that the paralysis, which was now confined to the lower limbs, must creep upwards by degrees until it reached a certain point, after which—— He paused, and Nadia, who had been listening like one in a dream, forced herself to ask the question——

"And how long—how long will it be before this point is reached?"

"It may be to-night, it may be to-morrow," he answered. "Therefore, if I may advise you, send your telegram immediately."

In a stunned condition she returned into the room to ask her mother the O'Malachy's address, only to be met by the question why she wanted it.

"The doctor thought he ought to be told," she murmured.

"But why?" asked Madame O'Malachy. "He must not be sent for unless it is necessary. Did the doctor say it was necessary?" she added, quickly.

Nadia bowed her head, unable to speak. For a moment her mother's eager eyes searched her face, then closed, as though in weariness.

"You will find your father's address on an envelope in my desk. Go and send your telegram, then bring the desk here to me. I will rest a little."

But when Nadia returned to the room, her mother seemed disinclined to rest. She made her tear up a number of papers and burn them, then sent her up-stairs for others, which were treated in the same way. Nadia had no opportunity of saying a word. At last, when the papers were all disposed of, she screwed up her courage to the point of asking whether she should read aloud a little.

"If you like," returned Madame O'Malachy, indifferently. "You will

find the novel I was reading on my toilet-table. I may as well finish it."

"Oh, not that, to-day!" entreated Nadia.

"And why not?" asked her mother. "If not that, nothing, thank you."

No more was said, and Nadia remained silent, feeling that she had wasted an opportunity. All that could be done for her mother's comfort during the day she did, humbly and unhappily conscious the whole time that she was not a good nurse. Her movements were too deliberate, no one could call her deft, and she felt sure that mistakes which passed unnoticed by her sick children and their parents were setting her mother's teeth on edge at this moment. The doctor had departed immediately after giving his verdict, and would not return until late at night, for he was a hard-worked general practitioner, and had several cases in the opposite direction in which his ministrations might possibly prove effective, while for this patient nothing could be done. Even if the O'Malachy were still to be found at the address to which the telegram had been sent, he could not be expected for three days at least, and it was by no means certain that he had not left before it could reach him. Nadia felt utterly lonely. Wearied and inexpressibly miserable, she sat down by the stove in the dusk, longing to say something, she knew not what, to her mother, to break down, even at this eleventh hour, the barrier of silence which their lives had raised between them. But she was tongue-tied, and it was Madame O'Malachy who spoke first.

"Turn your face round a little, my daughter, that I may see you. No; I cannot understand it. Tell me, what was it about you that attracted King Carlino?"

"I don't know," said Nadia, humbly. "I think it was only that he loved me."

"Yes; but why?" resumed Madame O'Malachy. "You do not make the most of yourself, you have no conversation, you make no effort to be agreeable. Is it that he admired your plainness of speech, which I, for one, call brutal?"

"Perhaps, a little," said Nadia. "Not altogether, certainly."

"You seem very doubtful," said her mother. "Have you never asked yourself these interesting questions? How are you to retain your influence over men if you have no idea of the means by which you first attracted their attention—their admiration?"

"I don't want to obtain influence over men," said Nadia, in a choking voice. "My own life has not been so successful that I need try any more to direct others."

"That exactly proves the truth of what I was saying," said Madame O'Malachy. "Tell me," she added, suddenly — "do you still love this young man?"

Nadia dropped on her knees by the bedside, and hid her face in the clothes. "It is cruel to ask me," she sobbed, "when he is going to marry the Princess of Moesia; but I do."

"I hear that he looks most unhappy, and appears to loathe the engagement," said her mother. Nadia raised her head in wild appeal.

"Oh, don't tell me that!" she cried. "Let me feel at least that he is happy, whatever becomes of me. I pray every day that they may love each other, and that their marriage may be a blessing to Thracia and to themselves."

"You bear no malice against him, then?"

"How could I? He is doing what I felt must be right."

"You would not wish him punished? If you knew of any danger——"

"Oh, mother!" she looked up with a cry. "I would walk barefoot to Bellaviste to warn him, even if he was to be married to-morrow. You have not joined in any plot to injure him?"

"Hush! I cannot tell you now. I must speak to your father, if he returns in time. Leave me alone with him if he comes, and I will tell you afterwards. If he does not return, I will tell you before the end."

Nadia returned to her place, and they talked no more until a sound of bustle outside announced an arrival.

"It is your father," said Madame O'Malachy; "I hear his voice. Besides," as Nadia's face showed signs of incredulity, "no one else would arrive so late. His business must have taken a shorter time than we anticipated, and no doubt he was already on his way here this morning, and missed the telegram."

Nadia went out, and found the O'Malachy in the passage, hearing from the waiter what had occurred. He looked anxious and worried.

"This is a bad business, Nadia," he said. "Where is your mother?"

Nadia took him into the room, and, mindful of her mother's injunction, left her parents alone together. From her post in the passage she could hear their voices, her mother's anxious and pleading, the O'Malachy's gruff and obdurate. After a time he opened the door and called to her to come in, telling her to get him something to eat, but refusing to yield to her suggestion that he should take his meal in another room. Presently he sent her off to unpack his portmanteau and get out what things he needed, and then he himself saw the doctor, and received his assurance that there would be

no marked change in the patient's condition before morning. Nadia had made preparations for sitting up with her mother; but he ordered her peremptorily to bed, and declared his intention of taking the night-watch himself. It was evident that he did not mean to leave her alone with Madame O'Malachy for a moment, and her anxiety became keen. A look from her mother warned her to obey, and she left the room, but lingered in the passage. Presently she heard Madame O'Malachy urging her husband to make himself comfortable in the cushioned chair which had been brought down for him, and rest a little after his journey, and before very long perfect silence reigned in the room. Nadia opened the door softly, and peeped in. A low "Hush!" from her mother brought her noiselessly to the side of the bed, where Madame O'Malachy lay wide awake, while the O'Malachy was beginning to give audible evidence of having fallen asleep in his chair.

"Kneel down here," whispered Madame O'Malachy, "where your father cannot see you if he wakes. Nadia, I have been trying to induce him to abandon the plot we have arranged—so much of it, at least, as threatens Carlino's life—but he will not consent. He has taken the idea that the King and Lord Cyril were playing with him all the time we were at Bellaviste, and he says he will not let himself be made a fool in the eyes of Europe. He will not consent to give up his revenge."

"And you have arranged to murder the King?" gasped Nadia. "Oh, mother!"

"What did you say, Barbara?" asked the O'Malachy, sitting up and looking round sharply. "If you want anything, don't be afraid of asking me for it. Sure I wasn't asleep, but I can't get the noise of the train out of me ears."

"Thanks, O'Malachy, I want nothing," returned his wife, and he settled himself in his chair again; but it was some time before the two women ventured to begin their conversation afresh.

"If you wish to save the King," Madame O'Malachy whispered, "listen to me now. The betrothal is to take place the day after tomorrow, and two days later Carlino will return to Bellaviste. One day soon after his return he is to inspect the garrison of Tatarjé—that is, if he escapes your father. There are two routes to the town, and it is at present uncertain which he will adopt. Louis is to discover this, and to let your father know. When a letter comes from him, and your father goes away on any pretext, you will know what is intended, and it is for you to warn the King, if you are still in the same mind."

"But why not write at once to Lord Cyril?" asked Nadia.

"Because we have confederates in the post-office, and your letter would be stopped. We are not alone, Nadia. The conspiracy is a great one, with ramifications throughout the whole of Thracia, and supporters in Scythia. It will take its course, but I will help you to save your Carlino's life if I can."

"But must I denounce my father to save him?" asked Nadia, horrified.

"Never! You must merely tell the King not to visit Tatarjé on that day, or if he will go, to alter his route. The change of plan will at once become known to Louis, and he will warn your father that the plot has been discovered, and he must escape. Or if, through any mischance, he should be away, do you telegraph at once to Mr F. X. O'Reilly, at Tatarjé, 'Go to Pavelsburg immediately, and await further orders there.' Your father will understand. He is to pass at

Tatarjé as an English newspaper correspondent, come to see the inspection, and he will leave at once."

"But is the rest of the plot to take its course?"

"Certainly. I tell you nothing, and you can tell nothing. I am not betraying anything that is indispensable to it. It was Louis who suggested to your father that it would ensure the success of the revolt if Carlino were got rid of first, and your father caught at the idea at once. It is entirely the fulfilment of his private revenge, and all the arrangements have been our work alone, though there is no doubt that the action would be welcomed by the other parties to the conspiracy, however eagerly they might appear to reprobate it in deference to public opinion. It is with reference to this alone that I will aid you; but once the alarm is given, the King's friends will look after his life carefully enough. In the revolution, when it arrives, he must take his chance; but if he falls, it will be in fair fight, not by a shot from ambush. Only be sure that when you warn him, you give your message either to Lord Cyril or to himself. They would believe you, but M. Drakovics would put you in prison in the hope of obtaining further information. And you must go disguised, in case Louis should recognise you. In any case, keep out of his way; he would not allow you to spoil his plans."

"But why do you all hate the King in this way?" asked Nadia, tearfully.

"Your father hates him because he thinks he overreached him in the matter of his proposing to you. If it had not been for this engagement to Princess Ottilie, he would have been most anxious that his life should be spared, hoping that he might yet return to you. But Louis does not hate him—it is

merely a matter of business. He is at Bellaviste to bring about a revolution, and he will do it more easily if Carlino is out of the way. He finds your father incensed against him, and immediately proposes to himself to take advantage of his desire for revenge to kill Carlino. No; he is not sacrificing his father——” as Nadia raised a horrified face. “Do you think I would have allowed that? The arrangements for escaping from the spot and leaving the country in safety are so complete that it would be almost impossible for your father to be captured, or even for his share in the—execution—to be known, —unless,” and Madame O’Malachy smiled with a trace of her old sarcastic spirit, “he told the story himself. But neither do I hate Carlino. I have almost a liking for him; but he is weak—he lets slip his chances. If he had married you, I would have done anything for him; but he allowed you, with your absurd scruples, to send him away. If he had been a *man*, he would have laughed at you. He would have made you marry him, and you would have liked him all the better for his roughness.”

“I should not!” cried Nadia, with flashing eyes. “I should have hated him, despised him. How could I like him if he made me do what I felt to be wrong?”

“Gently!” said her mother, as the O’Malachy stirred and muttered in his sleep. “Now you are beyond me. I speak only from ex-

perience, you from imagination, which is naturally far more trustworthy. But your father is uneasy. If he finds you here he will be ready to kill us both. Creep out quietly.”

“Let me stay with you here,” entreated Nadia. “I will be very quiet,—I will not speak. I—I should like to know you better. You have been so good to me to-day.”

“It is too late,” returned her mother. “I also—there are many things which one could wish changed, looking at them to-night. But one cannot do it now.”

“But—let me ask you just this—are you——”

“No; I know what you would say, but I cannot listen. You are Protestant, I Catholic. But you may pray for me if you like. Now go.”

Nadia rose and kissed her silently, and went out. The longing which both she and her mother had just put into words was strong upon her. If only they could have changed so many things! But it was too late. Old counsels of her godmother’s, Caerleon’s little-headed remonstrances, came thronging back upon her mind as she gained her own room and sank down upon a chair. She bowed her head upon the table, and sobbed.

“It is all my fault!” she said. “I never know how much reason I have to love any one before it is too late. Oh, if it may not be too late for her!”

THE WEST OF IRELAND.

A LINE drawn on the map from the head of the great bay called Lough Swilly in Donegal, to that of the still finer harbour of Bantry Bay in West Cork, will cut off almost all the really poverty-stricken regions of Ireland to the shores of the Atlantic. The visitor who passes north from Killybegs to Connemara and to the Donegal coast would be apt to form a very false idea of the prosperity of Ireland if he judged the country only from these wild western provinces, and was unacquainted with the beautiful lands between Dublin and Cork, or the fine pastures of Roscommon. A region of rugged mountains, moor, and bog stretches from Kerry to the Rosses in Donegal—a land full of poor landholders, subject to starvation whenever a wet season leads to the failure of the potato crop, and a land which appears steadily to have deteriorated and to have become more desolate within the last four or five centuries. But east of our boundary, nearly two-thirds of Ireland may compare with England in cultivation and prosperity—a prosperity which recent trade returns show to be steadily increasing.

With the advent to power of a strong and sympathetic Government, we may expect to see attention steadily turned to the improvement of the material condition of the peasantry in the poor west. No statesman enjoys such genuine popularity, or is as much trusted and respected by the poor in Ireland, as is Mr Balfour. He went among them—unlike former rulers—without escort or state, and the trust thus shown in a

wild population has borne fruit in gratitude and confidence. He left behind him a princely gift in the new railways, which now pierce the most remote districts, and connect them with the outer world; and he formed a policy which was better fitted to meet the wants of the country than any political scheme for revolutionary change in government.

It may therefore be interesting to describe briefly the present conditions of life in the west of Ireland, the changes that have within the last century slowly come about, and the further changes which may be expected in the future. The memory of the "bad times," which passed away nearly ten years ago, has caused Englishmen to form a very false idea of the present state of the once disturbed districts, where, however, occasional outrages still attest the need for firm administration of the law. It is supposed that no stranger is safe in such regions without his revolver or a police escort, no landlord able to levy his rents, no statesman secure if he visits the western counties; whereas the traveller might walk at night through any Irish mountain-lane or bog-road more safely than he could through the East End of London, while the tenants complain now much more of the rates—which fall with unjust severity on the landlord also—than of their rents; and the statesman who will make himself personally familiar with the west will meet with a grateful and cordial welcome, and a courtesy rare in other poor countries.

This western region is the land with which any statesman respon-

sible for Irish wellbeing has to deal. In the great famine years, 1845-46, it as yet had no roads, and the people died before any help could be brought. Good roads now run in all directions, and such a calamity has become impossible. Clifden in Connemara, Achill Island in South Mayo, Killala, which stands below its round leaning tower at the head of Killala Bay in North Mayo, Killybegs and Glenties in Donegal, and Ballinrobe east of Loch Mask, are now all reached by Mr Balfour's railways. Only Belmullet, in the north-west corner of Mayo, remains a world's end forty miles from any railroad. The good that has been done by these lines, and by those in Cork and Kerry, is already becoming manifest in the facilities for migratory labour to England and Scotland, and in the cheapening of supplies. The door to civilisation has been opened to a people once entirely cut off from the world; and the further development of this system seems likely soon to follow, to the permanent improvement of the conditions of life among the peasantry. Nor are railways the only boon bestowed of late, for the improvement of stock, drainage and reforesting of bogs, the development of the fishing and kelp industries, the building of better dwellings for the poor, and the enforcement of sanitary Acts, all engage Government attention. The terrible typhus fever still lingers in Connemara, and is clearly due to the crowding of human beings with their beasts in common hovels; but it is no longer the scourge of half a century ago. The fresh sea-breezes which prevail all over the west of Ireland render its climate one of the healthiest in the world in spite of rain, and it is only the ignorance

and prejudice of the peasantry that leads to the outbreak of fever, especially in years of dearth. The country is over-populated, and but for emigration and migration its destitution would be hopeless; but the steady improvement of its condition ought in time to render needless the temporary aid in bad years which tends to pauperise the people. It used to be said that "a famine was sorely needed," and "but for the famine we should all starve"; but in time such helpless dependence on State aid will, we may hope, give place to greater independence and prosperity.

The ordinary belief that the west Irish are a fierce and ungovernable race is not less mistaken. They are, as a rule, a timid and submissive people, though ruffians such as Lynchehan of Achill—condemned to penal servitude for his fiendish attack on an English lady last year—are found among them. The sympathy which is expressed for such scoundrels is due in part to religious hatred of Protestants and to clannish hatred of strangers, but it is also in great measure the outcome of fear. The Lough Mask murders are said to have been all plotted and carried out by one man—"Rory of the hills"—and the people shielded the assassin in great measure because they dreaded his violence. When once he was arrested outrages ceased in the district. Savage passions of jealousy, envy, and hatred do no doubt underlie the courteous deference of the peasant manner. Men in Donegal who could laugh at the agony of a poor rat soaked in paraffin-oil and set alight, are men capable of crime; but it cannot be doubted that the ruffianism of the few has given a bad name to the many who are too timid to stand up against them.

The virtues of the Irish peasant

are many and great. Family love, courtesy to the stranger, and stoical resignation under grinding poverty, are among them. There is strict honesty in matters of personal property. Theft is uncommon, and sheep-stealing a heinous crime in peasant judgment. A cheerful desire to please, and some gratitude for kindness, are equally characteristic of the people; and the poor help the poor in Ireland as they do elsewhere.

But, on the other hand, the standard of truth is as low in Ireland as in other Roman Catholic countries. Deceit against a Protestant is regarded as no crime by ordinary Irish priests, and a Church which recognises "mental reservations" cannot be expected to foster love of truth. Yet truth and faith on the part of rulers are exacted by peasant opinion, although they recognise no such obligation on themselves. The cowardice of the people leads to their being deceitful in all things, and next to this great failing one of their most characteristic deficiencies is the absence of steady purpose and stubborn effort. The Irishman will work with enthusiasm for a time, but after that he sits still and does nothing at all. He seems incapable of that steady daily labour which alone can lead to sound results, whether intellectually or physically. Great facility is common among Irishmen, and this facility is often ruinous to work done in a hurry, and never carefully considered or checked. The printing of an ordinary Irish newspaper is sufficient to attest the slovenly character of work done both by printer and by author.

In districts whence there is no migratory labour the peasant lives without any evidences of the immense wealth which is spread be-

fore the eyes of the poor in cities. The landed proprietor is usually ruined, and a few officials driving on cars represent the mysterious "Government." The greatest power in the small towns is, in the eyes of the peasantry, the rich shopkeeper, who holds the most of them in his debt, and often opposes railways and other improvements which would decrease his gains. The actual ruler of the community, in their belief, is the parish priest, who is always in communication with some official. Next to him stands the sergeant of the Royal Irish Constabulary, in whom the people have much confidence: the District Inspector, being a young man, is less regarded, as a rule. The yearly routine of village life includes a month's hard work in putting in potatoes, and another month in tending them. The turf for the winter is then cut, and the late summer and winter is an idle time. The worst month in the year for the peasant is July, when his store is exhausted and the new potatoes unripe. In common speech, "the July is on him" is a term for misfortune. In districts, however, such as Donegal, and Achill Island, with parts of Mayo, the men cross over in June to England or Scotland for the hay-making and harvest. Last year 1200 Irish girls from Achill went to the country near Paisley in summer, and came back before winter, and 1000 men also went thence to Wales and England, representing the majority of the able-bodied workers. Such migration does not, however, occur in purely Irish-speaking localities. Yet even there emigration to America prevails largely, and numbers are constantly passing to and fro between Ireland and the States. This emigration is hated by the priests,

who are, however, quite unable to prevent it. In Connemara few girls can get married till they have made their dowries in America. These peasants return with Republican ideas, and are much less under the authority of the priest than those who stay at home. That authority has already much decreased in the towns, though still powerful in the country. The towns are Parnellite in politics: the villagers elect the priest's candidate; for the priest who proposes him says publicly that the election of the Parnellite means rack-renting and eviction, "blazing thatch and ruined homes."

The rule of the priest, which is even yet enforced by physical arguments, shows signs of decay, due to several causes. They are not what they were as a class, and education begins slowly to tell, however wisely they have endeavoured to control it by building the schools, in which Government allows the founder to appoint the teacher. But beyond all, the action of the priests in the case of Parnell has damaged them in the eyes of their flocks. Parnell was the hero of the people. When he fell, the priestly hierarchy hesitated for a moment, and then denounced him. They waited too long, for meantime Mr Gladstone had spoken. The new policy of the priesthood thus appeared to be due not to moral principle, but to political timidity. The death of Parnell is not easily forgiven by the Irish to those who are regarded as having ruined him to secure their own power.

But yet more: the Irish peasant not only cares nothing now for Home Rule, but he fears and mistrusts its results. His nearest acquaintance with official proceedings is gained from Boards of

Guardians, notable chiefly for attempts at corruption. The peasant thinks in his heart that an Irish Parliament, of members appointed by priests, would be only a larger kind of Board of Guardians. To men such as the priest nominates the peasant thinks it unsafe to confide his savings. The polls in Ireland were less heavy than they might have been during last election, partly because of the distances to be traversed by voters, but mainly because the illiterate voter could not vote against the priest, and did not wish to vote for the priest's candidate. The return of Mr Balfour, the prospect of land legislation and land purchase, of the new railways hoped for, and of general expenditure in the west, has given far greater satisfaction to the peasantry than any triumph of political agitators could give. If troubles arise, they will not be the spontaneous result of disaffection, but—as before—they will be the acts of paid agents and due to political intrigue. The peasant desires peace and plenty, and a Government that will look after his material welfare. What that Government is, and where it has its centre, are matters of no importance to the tenants of the west.

The question before us is therefore how this material welfare can be secured, and whether it is possible for dwellers in such a land ever to prosper. We wish to know how it comes about that while the population of Ireland generally has so much decreased, the population of the poorest regions remains stationary, or even increases in spite of emigration. We wonder that the peasant who has been to England or to America is generally so eager to go back again for a time at least to his birthplace. We wonder if it

is possible to redistribute the people by natural means, and to relieve the terrible congestion of the destitute districts. Finally, we ask what were the great causes that led to the present condition of affairs, and what are the silent but resistless motors now working out changes, over which no Government or class can have great control?

The history of Ireland has been that of the driving westwards of weak races by stronger races from the east. The chain of Norman castles shows us how far they advanced over the better lands, and how they kept the Celtic tribes back in the western bogs and mountains. The same process of driving out the older population was repeated under Cromwell; and the followers of King William claimed their lands by the same right which had established M'Dermotts, Sullivans, or O'Briens before them—the right of conquest. Until the first quarter of the present century, when Drummond laid down the maxim that "property has its duties as well as its rights," the condition of Ireland was practically a feudal condition—a subject population under alien lords. The great famine drove Irishmen in masses to America, and they learned that not everywhere in the world were great landowners the natural chiefs to be obeyed by the people. They began to doubt the right to rent claimed by absentees who did nothing for the land, and to cherish the idea that land might in Ireland be bought and sold as easily as in America.

The wars of Napoleon destroyed Continental agriculture. The price of wheat rose in Ireland as in England, and the lands were gradually more and more converted into wheat-fields. The necessity for labour arose, and the outcasts in

the bogs were gradually brought in to till the fields. The population was thus more evenly distributed, but the famine came upon them and swept off especially those in the remote regions of the west.

About the same time, also, the ruin of many old families was brought about by the squandering of their wealth, and new men and new corporations came in which bought land as a speculation, often because it was advertised that the "rents were capable of being raised." None can doubt that great injustice was done by such landowners; that the labour of the peasant was made a source of profit by those who had done nothing for the land; and that rack-renting was common, and led to necessary control by Government. But the immediate result of the quarrel, coinciding with the decrease in the value of wheat, was that the landlord preferred to lay down again in grass all his best lands, and to rid himself—by eviction or otherwise—of his agricultural tenants. In good lands even, when they remained, there was strict prohibition against subdividing the holdings. In bad lands the agents did not so insist on keeping down the number of houses, and perhaps even encouraged tenants to go back to their bogs when no longer employable as labourers. Subdivision has gone on until the worst parts of the country have become most crowded with people, and a social ulcer is thus created, which may eat away the prosperity of the country, unless cured in time. The creation of large grazing-farms has led indeed to the reclamation by the peasantry of large areas of bog on their skirts; but such reclamation is laborious and tedious, and the tenant would much rather

till the better lands. The question for the community at large is simply, whether such lands are put to the best possible use.

It is for such reasons that the peasant in Ireland cares more for Acts tending to secure to himself the improvements due to his own labour, and to secure possibilities of easier purchase of land, than he does for any scheme of Home Rule. Under the late Government the poorer landlords had become resigned, and thought that the longer they delayed selling their lands the worse would be the price. They may look on it otherwise now; but they are already taxed heavily to support the overcrowded population of the bad subdivided lands. It is tolerably clear that under present conditions, which press on the landlord, and on the poor tenant whose rates the landlord pays, some scheme whereby land may be transferred from the ruined owner to others who have the means of working it, and in most cases to smaller owners, will naturally come about as a necessity forced on statesmen.

The parish priest favours such migration of his flock to better lands, if it could be brought about so that he might himself gain a better livelihood, and live in a less dismal region. He does not, however, favour the individual creation of small owners from among the better off of his people. His income depends on his dues—his Easter offerings, his wedding fees (often £12 for a poor couple, and much more from the rich), on the subscription in the plate placed on the coffin at a funeral, sometimes amounting to £20 or £30. He lives by the altar, and if it should ever suggest itself to his people that such voluntary gifts were a tax laid on themselves without any compensating advantage gained,

the Roman Catholic priesthood would disappear as surely as the priests of pagan Rome disappeared when men ceased to buy sacrifices of them. Meantime the priest's interest is that his people should become richer and pay more fees, not that the rich should leave him and the poor remain. There are, it must be said, many whose conscience is above their interest, and some who give to the poor rather than receive from them; but as a class this cannot be said of Irish priests.

The alternatives to removing the peasantry by land purchase seem to be emigration, or the improvement of the poorer lands. Both these palliatives are already at work, but the families of the poor are large, and the congestion is increasing. The people cling to the barren rocks amid which they were born, and often know little of the outer world. The first boon that could be conferred (and this has been given to them) consisted in the making of railways, of roads and bridges leading to market towns and to schools, or on which carts may go to fetch the turf from the bog. A great deal remains to be done in this respect, but a great deal has also been done. By these means, all acting together, the welfare of the peasantry constituting so large a proportion of the Irish population may in time be established.

There are, however, several prejudices to be removed, created as a rule by the Irish themselves. The Irishman is not too proud to accept all he can get, and has no objection to making a "poor mouth" when that is to his advantage. This method of lazily profiting by others is not confined to any class. The member of Parliament represents his constituents as in danger of starvation when the smallest pre-

text arises. The constituent expects to be helped by Government—to have his potatoes sprayed for him with “strawsonite,” and his stock of cattle, sheep, and ponies improved, gratis, by Government. Against all such coddling every wise Government must set its face. Against another plausible proposal it is equally necessary to be on our guard. To endow the Roman Catholic Church, and make its priests independent of their flocks but dependent on Government, would be to re-establish autocratic rule just when the people are beginning to have some idea of independence and progress. The gradual advance of civilisation in Ireland would at once be checked. Such feeble expression of public opinion as already exists would be silenced. The priest, no longer obliged to follow the public opinion of his parish, would rule supreme, and the smothered discontent with Government would gather immediate force.

Still more is it a mistake to suppose that the poor people of the west need no help, and should be made to help themselves or to go out. Such a bag-and-baggage policy is impossible for a civilised Government, representing a race which attaches importance very largely to sympathy with the Irish poor. In England we have as much poverty, but there are more to help. The landlord is better off, and the centres of wealth are not remote. In Ireland, if the Government does not help, there is practically no one else to do so. The people must starve. They have no money to go even to America in spite of its very cheap passage. In times of dearth, when the potato fails, all goes with it. Donkeys, horses, pigs, and cattle, as well as men, eat potatoes. The pig is not saleable; the stock dies;

the seed-potatoes are eaten; and then, if there were no help, there would be nothing to expect but famine.

It is urged that the evil arises from depending too much on the potato,—that the people should eat oatmeal, or even grow wheat. The answer is, that boggy land which, when mixed with a little lime and sand, grows excellent potatoes and fairly good oats, will not grow barley, wheat, or vegetables at all. In parts where they can make their own meal the people do eat oatmeal. They depend much less on the potato than they did, and purchase flour to make bread. American flour is cheap, and oatmeal bought in shops is dear. The potato may have been a curse to Ireland, but the misfortune of the people is that they have only bogs to till.

Again, it is commonly supposed that drunkenness is rife in Ireland, and the people consequently idle and unfit for work. In this respect, happily, there has been a great change. The illicit manufacture of the poisonous “potheen” is strictly repressed by the police, and the people cannot afford to buy whisky. The drinking of tea which is much too strong—in fact boiled—is said to cause more destruction to health in Ireland than does whisky. The increase of insanity has even been attributed to this immoderate tea-drinking, and the price paid for tea is much higher than its true value.

Again it is asked, Why should the Irishman come over to make the hay and reap the crops in England and Scotland, and how is it that he goes home again and does not stay? That he comes over is evidence that he is not unwilling to work. He is sent for by the farmer because his wages are low. That he returns home is not a

matter of sentiment alone, nor due to the fact that he returns to a Roman Catholic country. The winter is milder than in Scotland, the rent is cheaper than paying for lodgings in Scotland, the turf fire is warmer and more cheerful than the small coal he must buy at high price in Scotland. The turf fire costs him perhaps £3 for the family for all the year. While the man works abroad the family live cheaply at home, and till the potatoes and fatten the pigs. There are thus very good reasons why migratory labour should pay the Irish peasant best, and the change is welcome to him when life would otherwise be very monotonous. Boys and girls look forward to the end of their school-days, and to the time when they may go to the harvesting—or, still better, to the “oil-works,” where some thirty shillings a-week may be earned. The Irish peasant requires no one to teach him his own interests in this respect, and he works hard for a spell, looking forward to the idle winter before him at home.

In the north of Ireland another cause of discontent is gradually being removed through the building of labourers’ cottages. Not only is it becoming a custom to

separate the live stock in sheds from their owners, but the cottages can be rented without the labourer’s becoming bound to work only for the farmer who is his landlord. Under the old arrangement the labourer was badly housed, and was practically in the position of a feudal serf *ascriptus glebæ* till he gave up his cottage. There are few subjects more important in Ireland for the bettering of the condition of the peasantry than that of improving their housing, and inducing them to separate off their stock; but old customs and prejudices will take long to eradicate, and cleanliness is not an Irish virtue.

The suggestions thus offered regarding the condition and prospects of the west of Ireland lie quite apart from any question of party politics. They are not due to a hasty tour in Connemara, and many points will be recognised by those familiar with the country as representing well-known facts. The storms of recent years have blown over, and the power now rests with those who know Ireland, who have a familiar acquaintance with Irishmen, and who recognise what the sister island needs, and how far it is possible to aid her on the way to future prosperity.

RECENT CELTIC EXPERIMENTS IN ENGLISH LITERATURE.

THE difference in tone between the criticism of the beginning and the criticism of the end of the present century is a topic of no great novelty, but of much significance, and scarcely a week passes without its being emphasised more strongly than ever before. Our great-grandfathers took to task, corrected, castigated, condemned with freedom, and praised but sparingly; our contemporaries discover a new genius once a-month, and are astute to scent new "movements" and new "epochs," of which their darlings are the leaders or the heralds. One cannot help suspecting that some of our modern reviewers have been touched with that fairy ointment which, according to Highland tradition and Miss Fiona Macleod, confers upon its happy victim the gift of seeing "all that is ugly and hideous and dreary and bitter through a glamour of beauty." On no other ground, at all events, can we pretend to account for the current readiness to detect refinement in what is niggling, heroism in what is gross, grace in what is contorted, and vigour in what is merely bloodthirsty. Far be it from us to decide between the rival critical systems. Nevertheless, while recognising to the full the demerits of the one formerly in vogue (though we think it neither blasted promise nor checked wholesome activity), we own to being much more sensible of the disadvantages of that with which our own generation is familiar. To be told in seriousness that criticism is the "art of praise," is to be tempted wellnigh irresistibly to rush into the arms of our old friend the enemy, and to inscribe

upon our banner his famous device, "*Judex damnatur cum nocens absolvitur.*"

The evil of indiscriminating, though kindly and well-intentioned, criticism is severely aggravated by the introduction of such an element as the well-worn and hackneyed literary feud between the Sassenach and the Gael. A subject on which such torrents of nonsense have been poured forth might at last be allowed to rest in peace, while Philo-Saxon and Philo-Celt compose their differences over a tass of *aqua vite* and desist from their ancient strife. No sensible man, we presume, would nowadays deliberately adopt the attitude towards Celtic literature which Mr Matthew Arnold once for all so effectively condemned. Rather would he hasten to admit that "to do, and do, and do, and never dream," was not the chief end of man; that to the Celt we are beholden for many compositions of singular nobility and charm; and that Campbell—to whom the lovers of Celtic literature owe no less vast a debt of gratitude than the lovers of folk-lore—spoke no more than the truth when he opined that "the old spirit of popular romance is surely not an evil spirit to be exorcised, but rather a good genius to be controlled and directed. Surely stories in which a mother's blessing, well earned, leads to success; in which the poor rise to be princes, and the weak and courageous overcome giants; in which wisdom excels brute force,—surely even such frivolities are better pastime than a solitary whisky-bottle, or sleep, or grim silence; for that seems the choice of amusements if tales are forbidden, and

Gaelic books are not provided for men who know no other language, and who, as men, must be amused now and then." And inasmuch as to know two languages is better than to know one, the sensible man will rejoice that Gaelic or Welsh should be learned side by side with English, provided always (and the proviso is of vital importance) that free play is given to the English, and that no attempt is made, for political or, rather, parochial purposes, to train up a race of sour and Saxon-hating monoglots. On the other hand, every person of sense (so we should have imagined) will recognise that a man may find more to his hand than "to dream, and dream, and dream, and never do"; that infinite benefit may be gained by a just admixture of the Saxon with the Celtic temperament; and that it is a ridiculous and monstrous blunder to claim for the latter as its own special and peculiar offspring every element of excellence and value in the British character, the British constitution, and the British empire.

Here, however is Mr William Sharp blowing a loud and shrill blast upon his *feadan* (he can scarce be said to handle the full set of pipes) in honour of the Celt and of Celtic literature, as though the world had learned nothing in the last thirty years.¹ For him "no single work in our literature has had so wide-reaching, so potent, and so enduring an influence" as 'Ossian.' In his regard, we are all in the bustle of a Celtic "renascence" or revival, wherein a swarm of "eager young Celtic writers" are playing their parts. Why any such revival should be

needed is not very clear upon Mr Sharp's own showing, seeing that practically the whole of English literature seems in his view to be but a glorious procession of great Celtic authors. Nothing could be more simply or more conclusively proved. Either a given poet was of Celtic origin (*i.e.*, apparently, had a Celtic grandmother) or he was not. If he was, obviously he was a Celt, and *cadit questio*. If he was not, you turn to his work. You there find certain poetical qualities—imagination, grace, charm, beauty, what not—frequently possessed by Celts. Who can resist the inference that, albeit the poet came of a stock of unmixed Saxon ancestry, you are "justified in abiding by the far more significant and important lineage of the brain," and in proclaiming him a son of Taliesin and Ossian? From these two horns of the dilemma you are gracefully tossed into the desired conclusion that every great poet was or is a Celt, whence by the path of Celtic logic the transition is doubtless easy and swift to the proposition that every Celt is a great poet. A concrete instance or two of Mr Sharp's reasoning may suffice. "Keats, born a Cockney, is pre-eminently a Celtic poet, by virtue of the nationality of the brain, if for no other authentic reason." Coleridge and Shelley, again, he admits to have been of unmixed English blood; yet who, he asks, "can say there was nothing atavistic in their genius, and that the wild lyricism of the one and the glamour and magic of the other were not in part the expression of some 'ancestral voice'?" There is no proof, he confesses,

¹ *Lyra Celtica: an Anthology of representative Celtic Poetry.* With an Introduction and Notes by William Sharp. Edinburgh: Patrick Geddes and Colleagues. 1896.

that a near paternal or maternal ancestor of the late Mr Stevenson was of Celtic blood. "But who," he asks, in a similar transport, "that has studied his genius can question the Celtic strain in him?" As for poor Sir Walter, it seems that he was truly of the ancient stock and not a "typical Lowlander." For our part we had rather believe that Adam and Eve conversed in the Gaelic than that Scotts or Rutherfords were "English-speaking Gaels." One strange omission of Mr Sharp's we cannot refrain from noting. When he is so anxious to bring all fish into his net, why does he lay no claim to Lord Macaulay, who was of indubitable Celtic extraction, and the Celtic cast of whose genius is emphatically announced by that fine "reaction against the despotism of fact" predicated by Mr Arnold of the race, and conspicuously manifested in the greatest of Whig histories?

The advantages of Mr Sharp's method for one concerned in an anthology are not far to seek. He can draw at once upon the resources of Celtic poets who have not written in a "Celtic" strain, and upon the resources of non-Celtic poets who have. Let it at once be stated, however, that the privilege has not in the present case been abused, but that the preference has been given to poems of a distinctively Welsh or Irish or Gaelic flavour by writers whose Welsh or Irish or Gaelic origin is unmistakable. The literary merit of the collection has naturally suffered from this very proper course being taken. There is a good sprinkling of translations from the old Celtic bards, of which to say that many are bald is to speak with the tongue of flattery; and there is a large proportion of specimens from the workshops of

our most eminent minor poets,—those unlucky singers who seem destined never to attain majority. Following the critical fashion which we have presumed to criticise, Mr Sharp has a generous and kindly word of praise for all such. Do they not stand "foremost in the Celtic revival," and are not several enrolled in the band of "workers, thinkers, and dreamers" who have taken up their abode somewhere in the Old Town of Edinburgh? But when we read that the Celtic "renaissance" is "largely due to the rising sap in the Irish nation," we can hardly be condemned if we suspect that mere literary merit was not their sole passport to these pages, where are to be found certain indifferent staves from the pen of Mr John K. Casey, who was arrested in 1876 and imprisoned for a Fenian, and of whom Mr Sharp says: "This [his imprisonment], combined with the influence of his unselfish patriotism and the popularity of his lyrics, gave him a recognised place in the Irish brotherhood of song." When treason is so handsomely confessed to be part of the Irish poet's stock-in-trade, it seems rather invidious that the infamous "God save Ireland" should have been left out of Mr Sharp's pages.

But, dismissing finally all this chatter about Saxon and Celt, about eager young dreamers, about bands of thinkers and social reformers, and about rising saps, let us proceed to inquire whether any living writers of the younger generation, of unquestionable Celtic origin and unquestionable Celtic inspiration, have attained, or bid fair to attain, to an honourable and distinguished place in contemporary literature; for, having no pretensions to the powers of a *taibhsear*, we shall not attempt to anticipate the verdict of

posterity. And the first name that suggests itself, in the field of poetry, is that of Mr William Butler Yeats, the best and most notable portion of whose verse is reprinted in a pleasant and convenient volume of poems,¹ published last year. Unless our ears deceive us, we catch here and there in Mr Yeats's work a faint echo of the cant of Nationalism: he would fain be accounted among "the company who sang to sweeten Ireland's wrong." But with his political views we have nothing to do: our business, as Johnson said of Akenside, is with his poetry. Mr Sharp tells us that he is "a romancist who writes across the angle of the poetic imagination." We know not in the least what the phrase may mean; but we do know that in Mr Yeats's verse there is the true poetic ring, impossible to define, impossible to mistake. In technique he is finished and somewhat laboured, for occasionally he falls short of the skill requisite to conceal his toil. But, wisely as we think, he has not gone for his models to Erse or Gaelic poetry, nor has he attempted to interweave any Celtic conventions or idioms with the fabric of his rhythm and metre. On the contrary, we should conjecture that the chief objects of his admiration have been Lord Tennyson, Mr Swinburne, and Mr Rossetti, the traces of whose influence, though not obtrusive, are palpable enough in his versification. As for his material, he has drawn almost exclusively upon the inexhaustible stock of Irish tradition and legend; and he has imparted to it a fresh beauty, and armed it with a new and potent spell. Take a stanza from "The Stolen Child":—

"Where dips the rocky highland
Of Sleewth Wood in the lake,
There lies a leafy island
Where flapping herons wake
The drowsy water-rats;
We've hid our faery vats
Full of berries,
And reddest of stolen cherries.

*Come away, O human child!
To the waters and the wild
With a faery, hand in hand,
For the world's more full of weeping
than you can understand."*

Does not that captivate and enchant? Does not the music of it haunt the mind and keep ringing in the ears? Or take again "The Meditation of the Old Fisherman":—

"You waves though you dance by my
feet like children at play,
Though you glow and you glance and
you purr and you dart;
In the Junes that were warmer than these
are, the waves were more gay,
*When I was a boy with never a crack
in my heart.*

The herring are not in the tides as they
were of old;
My sorrow! For many a creak gave
the creel in the cart
That carried the take to Sligo town to
be sold,
*When I was a boy with never a crack
in my heart.*

And ah, you proud maiden, you are not
so fair when his oar
Is heard on the water, as they were,
the proud and apart,
Who paced in the eve by the nets on
the pebbly shore,
*When I was a boy with never a crack
in my heart."*

Were the vain longings and regrets of old age ever expressed more effectively? the petulance so delicately indicated, the melancholy so sympathetically touched? Or were the claims of the poet, as opposed to the man of science or of action, ever more cogently

¹ Poems. By W. B. Yeats. London: T. Fisher Unwin. 1895.
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expressed than in the opening lines of the exquisite "Song of the Happy Shepherd"—

"The woods of Arcady are dead,
And over is their antique joy;
Of old the world on dreaming fed;
Grey truth is now her painted toy;
Yet still she turns her restless head;
But, O, sick children of the world,
Of all the many changing things
In dreary dancing past us whirled,
To the cracked tune that Chronos sings,
Words alone are certain good.
Where are now the warring kings,
Word be-mockers?—By the Rood
Where are now the warring kings?
An idle word is now their glory,
By the stammering schoolboy said,
Reading some entangled story:
The kings of the old time are fled.
The wandering earth herself may be
Only a sudden flaming word,
In clanging space a moment heard,
Troubling the endless reverie."

Mr Yeats's rare gift has, it will have been seen, more forms of expression than one. "Father Gilligan" is very different from "The Death of Cúhoollin," the "Rose of Peace" from the strong yet affecting "Ballad of the Fox-hunter," where (gallant and inspiring lines!)

"The huntsman loosens on the morn,
A gay and wandering cry."

But all his poetry is overcast with the same mournful air, which never becomes sombre nor sinister on the one hand, nor a mere trick or affectation on the other, but which seems as though charged with the remembrance of a melancholy past and the premonition of an unhappy future. In short, the key-note is struck by his own melodious refrain—

"The world's more full of weeping than
you can understand."

Other modern Celtic poets may have a thousand excellences—Mrs Hinkson, for example, has written much that is graceful and tender—

but Mr Yeats has more of the root of the matter in him than any of his competitors, with the exception of Mr T. E. Brown, who may fairly be described as king in Man, and whose material and method, wholly admirable in their own way, are perhaps too dissimilar from Mr Yeats's to admit of any profitable comparison.

Up to a comparatively recent date the "Young Celtic" party in literature, if we may so term it, had expended its energies far more on verse than on prose, the former vehicle of expression being doubtless the more congenial to its peculiar idiosyncrasy. But matters seem likely to alter in this respect. When the villages and country towns of the Lowlands had been exploited with immense applause by writers of greater or less ability, the Highlands could obviously not have long to wait for their turn. Ireland, indeed, came first. Miss Jane Barlow presented the world with some sketches of Irish life; while an anonymous writer in a contemporary of 'Maga's' was responsible for a few striking studies of Irish peasant character, and in particular for one memorable picture of that character as it appeared corrupted and turned to all manner of evil by the influence of the Land League. The Gael has enjoyed a more protracted respite; for a little longer the peat-reek of the clachan was to be inhaled by no prying nostril, and his glens were to remain inviolate, free from the peering eye and the unhallowed finger. But the hour has struck; the man (and the woman) have come; his doom has fallen with tenfold severity; and the press teems with prose works in which he, in one or other of his Protean manifestations, is the very pivot of interest. Seriously, we think

he has no ground of complaint so long as he is treated as a proper man would choose to be handled, and we now propose to consider what has been made of him by two writers who have recently attracted no inconsiderable share of the public interest and attention.

Miss Fiona Macleod has, up to the present time, published three volumes,¹ and it is pleasant to be able to affirm without qualification that each succeeding book has shown a marked improvement on its predecessor. The touch has become firmer and more confident; concentration has taken the place of diffuseness; power has at length been born of effort. For he must indeed be devoid of sensibility who does not detect in 'Pharais,' despite all its crudeness, despite all its amateurishness, the deliberate, conscientious, and painful endeavour of a young writer to write well. Here, says the reader, is clearly one who is not content with the humdrum vocabulary of everyday life and everyday novels; she must be after something new, after choice rare words, to give utterance somehow to the rare and moving thoughts and impressions of her mind. Hence she had rather employ a long word than a short one (wherein she will often be quite right; for do not words like "tumultuous" and "multitudinous" possess a grand mouth-filling sound?), and she had rather be eccentric—rather even use an out-of-the-way, downright foreign word like *susurrus*—than risk the being commonplace. As an able critic has pointed out, such bursts of euphuism are necessary in every

age to revive and rejuvenate our tongue: time alone can sift the bad from the good, and apply the test of what deserves to survive. The consequences, however, of these outbreaks must be faced; and so 'Pharais' is full of screeds of what used to be called "word-painting," which, to be quite frank, were better at the back of the fire. To say, for example, that a torch let down into a dark cave "was like a blood-red wound in the flank of some vast black creature of night," is surely to be guilty of extravagance none the more excusable that it reminds one of the worst excesses of Mr Burke. Here, too, are a couple of specimens where effort has not yet mellowed into achievement:—

"The wind had risen slightly. The splash, splash of the sunny-green waves against each other, the lapping of the blue water upon the ledges to the east, the stealthy whisper where the emerald green tide-flow slipped under the hollowed sandstone, the spurtle of the sea-wrack, the flashing fall and foam-send of the gannets, the cries of the gulls, the slap of wind as it came over the forehead of the isle and struck the sea a score of fathoms outward—all gave her a sense of happiness. The world seemed suddenly to have grown young. The exultant Celtic joy stood over against the brooding Celtic shadow, and believed the lances of the sunlight could keep at bay all the battalions of gloom."—P. 12.

"The sky overhead had become a vast lift of perishing yellow—a spent wave of daffodil by the north and by the south; westward, of lemon, deepening into a luminous orange glow, shot with gold and crimson, and rising as an exhalation from hollow cloud sepulchres of amethyst, straits of scarlet, and immeasurable spaces of

¹ *Pharais: A Romance of the Isles.* Derby: Frank Murray. 1894.

The Mountain Lovers. London: John Lane. 1895.

The Sin-Eater, and other Tales. Edinburgh: Patrick Geddes and Colleagues. 1896.

dove-grey filled with shadows of the most pale sea-green."—P. 13.

Both passages are decidedly meritorious, but both labour under the disadvantages incident to the "catalogue" method of describing nature—the bare enumeration and accumulation of a variety of distinct particulars; and while in the latter extract there are added to these the drawbacks attendant upon the "child's colour-box" method, which would fix and pin down the varying and evanescent hues of nature to burnt umber, crimson lake, emerald green, and so forth, in the former we are unpleasantly conscious of the author's mind straining to discover new nouns and new adjectives for old sights, and finally succeeding in evolving the neither very appropriate nor very attractive "spurtle." Yet even in 'Pharais' effort is at least once rewarded:—

"Morning and noon, afternoon and evening, night and the passing of night, dawn and sunrise: these were the veils that seemed to curtain off this spot of earth. Storm followed calm; calm succeeded storm; the wind came and went; the tides rose and fell. In summer, the rains from the south; in autumn the rains from the west; in winter the rains from the north. Change followed change, but orderly as in processional array. The poppies reddened the scanty fields of rye; the swallows and martins haunted the island-ways; the wild rose bloomed, as with white and pink sea-shells made soft and fragrant. Then a little while, and the ling grew purple at the passing of the roses; the hawks swung in the wind when the swallows had vanished; the champions waved where the poppies had fallen; the grey thistle usurped the red grain. In summer, the Weaver of Sunshine rested there; there, during the equinox, the Weaver of the Winds abode; in winter, the Weaver of the Snow made a white shroud for the isle and wove a shimmering veil for the dusking of the sea. And as one

spring was like another spring, and one autumn like another autumn, so was one year like another year, in the coming and in the going."—P. 156.

The firmer and more confident touch we have alluded to is apparent throughout 'The Mountain Lovers,' and nowhere more than in the following description of sunrise:—

"The wind reached the forest before the first lances of the sunlight had thrust themselves through the umbrage at its higher end. Nial heard it lifting the still air of the pine-glooms with its vast wings, and beating it to and fro, sending volleys of fragrant breath from swaying tree-top to tree-top. It wandered nearer and nearer: at first overhead, so that only the summits of the pines swayed southward, but soon it came leaping and blithely laughing through the long aisles of the forest. The indescribable rumour of the sun-flood followed. As the old Celtic poets tell us, the noise of the sunfire on the waves at daybreak is audible for those who have ears to hear. So may be heard the sudden rush and sweep of the sunbeams when they first stream upon a wood. The boughs, the branches, the feathery or plume-like summits of the trees, do homage at that moment when the gates of wonder open for a few seconds on the unceasing miracle of creation. The leaves quiver, or curl upward, even though there be no breath of air. It is then that crows, rooks, wood-doves, and, on the heights, the hawks and eagles, lean their breasts against the sun-flood and soar far forward and downward on wide-poised motionless wings: a long, unswerving, scythe-sweep, strange in its silent and ordered beauty, to be seen similarly at no other time.

"The sound was an exaltation throughout the forest. Some invisible presence dwelt everywhere. Every branch held a note of music: every leaf was a whisper. There was not a frond of bracken, a blade of grass, that did not bend listeningly. The wind-flowers in the mossiest hollows were tremulous.

"When the sunbeams came dancing and leaping in the track of the wind, the note of exultation, in deepening, became more indiscriminate. The bleating of the stags, the lowing of the distant kye, the plaintive crying of the ewes and lambs, the calls and songs of the birds, the myriad indeterminate voice of morning, blent in a universal rumour of joy."—P. 16.

This is undoubtedly a fine piece of work of its kind (marred only perhaps by the invented adverb "listeningly," not Miss Macleod's only slip of the sort), and there are many others like it in the same volume. In 'The Sin-Eater,' on the other hand, which in some points is superior to 'The Mountain Lovers,' the descriptions of natural scenery, particularly in the pair of short sketches entitled "Tragic Landscapes," seem to recall some of the earlier faults, and to miss the desired end through a too anxious and ostentatious manipulation of the means.

Nature must needs play a prominent part in Celtic romance; and it is curious to note in what other guess fashion she plays it when Mr Munro¹ pulls the strings. In his work too we get the atmosphere, the sense of the sun, the air, and the sea. But he contrives his effects not by an elaborate and carefully adjusted series of minute touches. On the contrary, he dashes on a few bold essential strokes, and the picture is complete.

"Rain came with the gloaming. Aora, the splendid river, roared up the deep glen from the Salmon Leap; the hills gathered thick and heavy round about the scattered townships, the green new tips of fir and the copper leaves of the young oaks moaned in the wind. Then salt airs came tearing up from the sea, grinding branch on branch, and the whole land

smoked with the drumming of rain that slanted on it hot and fast."—P. 44.

"Going round Stron on the hard yellow road, he got to think of the sea's good fortune,—of the many bays it wandered into by night or day; of its friendship with far-out forelands, and its brisk quarrels with the black rocks. Here was no dyke at any time, but all freedom, the restlessness and the roaming, sleep or song as the mood had it, and the ploys with galleys and gabberts; the cheery halloo of the winds and the waving of branches on foreign isles to welcome one."—P. 78.

That is how Mr Munro does it, and the reader may make his choice between the two methods.

In the last-quoted passage there appears an element which is in reality far more characteristic of Miss Macleod than of Mr Munro: we mean the correlation between the phenomena of nature and the phases of human feeling. In Mr Munro's short stories the human predominates over the natural interest, while the very reverse holds true in regard to Miss Macleod. Yet, inconsistent as it may appear, the whole orchestra of nature is attuned by her to harmonise with the moods of her characters. Are they, in an unguarded moment, moderately cheerful? The sun shines, and the birds and beasts rejoice. Are they, as their habit is, plunged in gloom? Instantly, to keep them company, the face of heaven and of the deep is overclouded. Are their bosoms torn by the unspeakable conflict of the passions? The sky forthwith darts out its lightnings and bellows in thunder. The artifice is legitimate enough, and has been sufficiently approved by the example of many great writers. Yet must it be used sparingly, on pain of

¹ *The Lost Pibroch, and other Shelling Stories.* By Neil Munro. Edinburgh: William Blackwood & Sons. 1896.

ceasing to be impressive; and for our own part, the single occasion in the whole range of English fiction which remains indelibly impressed upon our mind as one on which the conduct of the elements is inextricably blended with the affairs of men, is when we sit with Harry Bertram and Dinmont in the jail, and hear the full tide, dashing hoarse, in a "multitudinous complication of waves" upon the shore at Portanferry.

When, to use an irreverent though time-honoured expression, we "cut the cackle" about nature and come to the "humans," as we are sorry to say she more than once calls them, it must be owned that Miss Macleod is decidedly disappointing. That she can delineate character with great vigour and power is plain enough. Look at the admirable "Sin-Eater," look at the gruesome "Dan-nan-ron," look at the "Green Branches"; look, above all, at Torcall Cameron of Màm-Gorm and Anabal Gilchrist, in 'The Mountain Lovers,' the scene of whose meeting after the lapse of many years is intensely dramatic, and shows what Miss Macleod can really achieve. But the other characters—though the reader's sympathy and interest are incessantly and almost explicitly invoked—how colourless and uninteresting they are! They have, no doubt, a double dose of the Celtic gloom, but of the Celtic zest of life, not an atom. The moment their happiness is attained they are attacked by a malignant atrophy; they begin to dwindle, peak, and pine; and we verily believe there is not a birth recorded in these stories (and such events are of frequent occurrence) which does not result in the death of mother or child, or both. Alastair and Lora, in 'Pharais'; Alan and Sorcha, in 'The Mountain Lovers,'

are equally "fashionless," are equally touched with the same curious debility. The beauty of Angus Ogue himself will not preserve the man, nor the piety of St Bridget the woman, from this epidemic anemia. The truth is that, to judge from her rather pretentious prefaces, Miss Macleod has tried too hard to write up to an imaginary Celtic ideal. She knows that the Celtic race is addicted to melancholy; that it is highly susceptible of the "elemental" emotions; that it is imbued with an almost oriental fatalism. And so, in creating characters who must be typically Celtic, she has been content to make them "elemental" without making them human; and has conceived that all is triumphantly brought off when her stories have a miserable conclusion. In not one of them is there a hint of the imminent inevitable which hangs like a pall over 'The Bride of Lammermoor,' or over the incomparable 'Clarissa' of the pragmatic little Saxon printer. The experienced reader soon learns to look for an unhappy ending—and that is all.

One other deplorable element (to the stones be it spoken) here and there protrudes its cloven hoof. Alan, we read in 'The Mountain Lovers,' "though he had come to her virginal-pure, yet feared Sorcha's eye at times, because—though not knowing it for what it was—of the deep-buried spiritual anathema which, in the gaze of the purest and noblest of women, affronts the chained brute that is in the man." That is not Celtic; that is mere "new woman," rank, naked, and unashamed.

When we turn to 'The Lost Pibroch,' we enter a region peopled with mortals of a very different stamp, whom we gladly welcome

as fellow-creatures. They too are Celts,—sensitive, sensuous, easily mastered by revenge and hate, keenly alive to the smile and frown of external creation, deeply conscious of the irresistible might of destiny; yet they have that touch of nature which makes Jew and Gentile, Dutchman and Kaffir, Celt and Saxon, kin. Namely, men they are, the most of them, for the pipes, and the *camanachd*, and the sword; men who bear themselves in the world with a befitting strut of pride; men whose concern is mainly war, while the business of their women is to put hip to a creel of peats or the *caschrom* (hand-plough) to the soil; men who know a ready slash in a bruilzie worth fifty head of kyloes, yet who think no shame to spit on the dirty tartan of a fallen foe; men who on occasion can be lusty enough with the ale among the other pretty fellows; while in the background, dimly encompassing this race of rude warriors—so exultant in victory, so sullenly indomitable in defeat—looms the mighty shadow of MacCailein Mor himself, as he surveys and directs the world from the Castle of Inveraora. "The Glen is mine, the Glen is mine!" sang the blithe chanter of the blind piper, Paruig Dall; "and, by Finne's sword, Macruimen himself could not have fingered it better!" To some such manly and bracing tune is the greater part of 'The Lost Pibroch' set; but you may search Miss Macleod's pages line by line, and never catch a note of it.

With three of Mr Munro's stories the readers of 'Maga' are already acquainted, and it is therefore needless to do more than recall the names of "Black Murdo," "The Fell Sergeant," and "Shuderman Soldier." Of the others,

the story that gives the volume its name is instinct with a mysterious and indescribable charm, "Red Hand" is as powerful as it is horrible, and "The Secret of the Heather-Ale" narrates the death of one who "had the heart of a man" by his implacable enemy's own confession. "The Sea-Fairy of French Foreland" and "Castle Dark" are both well worth reading; but to our mind the three gems of the book are the remaining tales—"A Fine Pair of Shoes," "War," and "Boboon's Children." From the first named of these we shall not extract, but shall leave it to be tasted, whole and entire, by the reader; but by aid of the others we hope to convey some idea of Mr Munro's matter and manner.

"War," then, opens with the town of Inveraora waking up on the morning of the day when it behoves the Campbells to take the road to join King George's army against the Young Pretender. Jean Rob, the swordsmith's wife, had not shut an eye all night, "thinking, thinking even on," for she came of a folk "given to be throng with the head." Rob Donn himself snored at her side slow and heavy, though he had to march that morning, having accepted twenty pounds English from Elrigmor to take his place with the Campbells. The money went in Rob Donn's sporran, and Jean would have bit her tongue out before craving for part of it from a man going among strangers and swords.

"The bairn had but one word for her father from then till he started, and that was 'Cockade.' What it was the little one never knew, but that it was something braw and costly, a plaything for a father to go far off for.

"Two or three of them, my white

love !' would Rob Donn say, fond and hearty. 'They'll be as thick as nuts on the ground when we're done of the gentry that wear them on their bonnets.' And he had a soft wet eye for the child, a weakling, white and thin, never quite the better of the snell winds of winter. If cockades, indeed, were to be had for the fighting of a fortnight without sleep, Rob Donn would have them for her.

"So now was the morning to put on fighting gear and go on the foray for white cockades."

At last the pipes struck up the gathering :—

"Up and down the street went Dol' Dubh, the Duke's second piper, the same who learned the art of music right well from the Macruimens of Borerraig, and he had as sweet a finger on the chanter as Padruig himself, with the nerve to go round the world. Fine, fine it was for him, be sure, to be the summoner to battle ! Lights jumped to the little lozens of the windows and made streaks on the cracks of the doors, and the Major's man came from his loft ganting with a mouth like the glee'd gun, a lantern swinging on a finger, making for the stable to saddle his master's horse. A garret window went up with a bang, and Peter MacIntyre, wright, put out a towsey head and snuffed the air. It was low tide in the two bays, and the town was smelling less of peat-reek than of sea-wrack and saltness. One star hung in the north over Dunchuach.

"'They have the good day for starting the jaunt, whatever,' said the wright. 'If I was a stone or two lighter, and had one to look after the shop, it's off on this ploy I would be too.' He took in his head, the top nodding briskly on his Kilmarnock bonnet, and wakened the wife to help him on with his clothes. . . . Dol' Dubh was up at the Cross, swelled out like a net-bow, blasting furiously, his heart athump with the piper's zest. Doors drummed, windows screeched in their cases, women's voices went from land to land, and the laugh and cry of bairns new roused from the hot toss of dreams.

Far up the highroad a horse's hoofs were dunting hollow and hearty on the stones, and by-and-by through the Arches trotted the Cornal, his tall body straight and black against the dun of the gables. He had a voice like a rutting deer. 'Master Piper,' he roared to Dol' Dubh, tugging his beast back on its haunches, 'stop that braggart air and give us "Bundle and Go," and God help the Campbell that's not on the Cadger's Quay before the sun's over Straz Point !'

"'Where is the air like it?' said Dol' to himself, slacking a reed with a thumb-nail. 'Well they ken it where little they love it with its vaunting !' But he up with his drones on his shoulder and into the tune that had the Cornal's fancy. Beside him the Cornal stood at his horse's stirrup in the grey-brown of the morning, his head still light with the bottle of claret wine his lady in Lecknamhan had put before him ere he had boot over saddle."

And so the Campbells depart, rowing over the loch, Rob Donn with them.

"A grey cold day with rain on the tail of it. High Creag Dubh with its firs and alders and rowans stark and careless over the hollow town. Broad day and brightness, and the cruises and candles burning the ghosts of flame in the empty houses, with doors wide to the empty street and the lanes and closes !"

Mr Munro does not conduct us to Culloden with Rob Donn, whose twenty pounds are soon spent, but invites us to stay with those left at home, and to watch Jean Rob and her bairn starving.

"The wanderer," he observes in a fine passage, "has ever the best of it, and wae wae are the hearts behind ! Is it for war or sport, or for the red gold, that a man turns heel on his home and takes the world for his pillow ? In his pack is the salve for care as well as for sword-cuts, for ever and always are new things happening. The road crooks through the curious glens ; the beasts trot among

the grass and fern and into the woods; the girls (the dear ones, the red-lipped ones!) come from the milking of the white-shouldered cattle and look with soft black eyes as he passes, and there is a new tale at the corner of every change-house fire. All that may befall a packman; but better's the lot of the fighter with steel at his haunch, fire at his heart, and every halt a day closer to them he would be seeking."

We will not follow Jean's struggles in detail. Every day the stock of meal in her girdle becomes lower: shell-fish and herbs are her fare: the child grows thinner and thinner: yet Jean endures her poverty without complaint, and refuses to solicit the aid of her cousin the rich merchant. News of Culloiden comes: the duddy Macleans and Macdonalds and Camerons from the Isles and the North have been scattered like chaff; Tearlach himself is a fugitive; and a Sunday has been spoiled with the ale going free and merry at the change-house at the Duke's charge. Day follows day, and still no Campbells return, for they are harrying the North for the glory of MacCailein Mor. At last a day comes bringing with it a shoal of herrings:—

"It was ho-ro! and spill the bicker in yon town, for all that the best of its men were away and afar at the killing. The smoke was black from the fires in the Cooper's Pool, the good healthy smell of the gut-pots sought up to the Castle door. Little doubt his Grace (*beannachd leis!*) would come out to the door-step and curse because it made him bock his breakfast, dainty man!"

On that self-same day Jean is reduced to the extremity of bleeding Mally the cow to make a pudding of the blood; and just as she is stirring it in the pot, the child expires, and the lilting of a bag-pipe comes over the glassy bay.

The clan Campbell is back from the wars:—

"'Who's that,' asks the Duke, 'with the white cockade in his bonnet? Is't Rob Donn?'

"'It is Rob Donn, cousin, with a bit of the ribbon contrivance for the diversion of his bairn. He tore it from the bonnet of the seventh man he put an end to.'

"'There's luck in the number, any way, though it was a dear plaything. March!'

"Down the road, with their friends hanging about them, and the boys carrying guns and knapsacks, went the men for the town, and Rob Donn left the company as it passed near his own door.

"'Faith! 'Tis a poor enough home-coming, without wife or bairn to meet one,' said he, as he pushed in the door.

"'Wife! wife!' he cried ben among the peat-reek, 'there's never a stot, but here's the cockade for the little one!'

"Boboon's Children" is in a somewhat different vein. It's hero is John Fine Macdonald—Old Boboon—chief of the oldest and noblest of wandering clans; and of him the captain in Inverara once took the notion to make a tame houseman. So the captain clapped him into a kilt of his own tartan, put a pickle money in his sporran, and gave him a place a little way down his table. The feeding was high and the work to a wanderer's fancy.

"'Ho, ho!' said Boboon, 'am not I the sturdy fellow come to his own?' and about the place he would go with a piper's swagger, switching the grass and shrubs with a withie as he went, in the way gentlemen use riding-sticks.

"But when Inverara town lay in the dark of the winter night, and the captain's household slept, Boboon would hear his clan calling on him outside the wall.

"'Boboon! oh, Boboon! old hero! come and colloque with your children.'"

Then Boboon would go and colloquy with his clan, and they would say—

"But the freedom outbye, John, old hero! Last night we had the bravest of fires; the sparks flew like birds among the Duke's birches, the ground was snug and dry, and——"

"Begone! I tell ye no!"

"Listen! To-day we were among the white hares beyond the Beannan, thwacking the big fat fellows with our clubs. Such sport was not in all Albainn!"

"White hares!"

"White hares, old John! And Alasdair Beag has some new tunes since you left us—a *piobaireachd* he picked up from a Mull man."

"Would it be 'Faillte an Roich'?"

"Better than that by far; a masterly tune! Come out and hear him."

"But old Boboon leaned with his arms on the wall and made no move to be off with his children."

After many nights, however, their importunity prevailed, and he went over the wall to join his clan. Again the Captain got him and put him in a new kilt and jacket; and again Boboon, sick of the causey stones and fain of the country road which goes to the end of a man's will and no farther, rejoined the wanderers. Once more the Captain came across Boboon at Kilmichael Fair, and brought Boboon and his daughter Betty back to the town, lodging them in a room in Macvicar's Land, with a wooden floor, and a fire on the side of the wall with a built-in chimney, and other gentilities beside. Betty was put to the books and the arts of ladydom, lost the twang of the road-folk, and became for grace and good looks the match of them that taught her. But Boboon began in course of time to hanker after his wandering ways, and finally got permission to go from the Captain, to whose announcement

of his passion for Betty, Boboon replied with the warning proverb: "There are few lapdogs in a fox's litter."

So Betty married the Captain, and died after bringing him a son: whereupon the Captain took to the bottle, leaving the boy to women who had no skill of wild youth:—

"And the child grew like a fir-tree, straight and tall, full of hot blood, swung about by whim and the moment's fancy. For him it was ever the horse and gun, a snatched dinner and hearty, and off to the wood or hill. He got to know the inner ways of the beasts that hide in the coarse grasses and the whin; at a whistle he could coax flapping birds to come to heel. A loose vest and a naked neck for ever were marring his gentility, and his closest friends were countrymen with hard hands and the load ready laugh."

One day the Captain sent for him, and after some parley he said, "Look ye, my son, what are ye meaning to be?"

"I'm for the sword-work," the lad answered.

"I would sooner see you in hell first!" cried the Captain, thumping the board till the glass rang.

That was the beginning of their feud; but at length one day, quoth the Captain, "To the door, brat, and your lair with the Boboons you belong to! Faith, and your grandfather was right when he said there was never a lapdog in a fox's litter." Then the lad put on his bonnet and went out of the house on to the highroad, and wandered through the brawling winter's day, and through the dark evening sodden with rain.

"When he came to Kennachregan, there was the scad of a fire above the trees beside the roaring river, and he went down and looked over a march dyke at a band of wanderers under the trees. Young and old, men and

women, they lay steaming on soft beds of springy spruce-branches with their toes to the crackling logs, snoring as snore sound sleepers, sheltered from the rain by the thick branches, the side of the hill, and here and there a canvas covering. There was but one of them up—a long old man with lank jaws and black eyes—John Fine Macdonald. He was stirring up the logs with the shod of a crutch and humming a Perth song, and before the hottest of the fire a plucked bird was roasting.

"The smell of the meat and the wood-fire rose to the dykeside where the lad stood shivering in his wet clothes, and the comfort of the camp was something he could not pass by.

"He took a jump over the dyke and went out in the light of the fire, wondering what would be his welcome. Old Boboon looked up with his hand over his eyes, then rose on his crutches and put a hand on the young fellow's shoulder.

"'You're from Inneraora town?' said he.

"'I am,' said the lad; 'but it's Inneraora no more for me.'

"'Ho! ho!' laughed the old wanderer. 'Sit ye down, ye scamp, and take your fingers to a pick of your grandfather's hen. Boboon's children may be slow and far, but home's aye home to them!'"

Upon such a text we venture to think that comment is unnecessary. The astonishing vividness with which the gathering of the Campbells is portrayed, the poignant contrast between the glut of herring and the starvation of Jean Rob and her child, the irresistible hereditary spell possessed by the nomadic life over Old Boboon and his grandson, the deep pathos, the masterly restraint,—these surely

speak for themselves in language plain enough for the dullest to comprehend. We honestly confess to having experienced no such agreeable excitation of spirits, no such keen and stimulating pleasure, from the reading of any collection of short stories since first we made the acquaintance of Mr Kipling's writings.

May we, in conclusion, presume to offer a word of counsel to Miss Macleod and to Mr Munro? Let Miss Macleod write no more prefaces, and let her cease to brood with a delicious melancholy over the hapless destiny of the Celt. Let her banish from her mind the overburdening sense of what his qualities are supposed to be; let her prune the luxuriance of her style; let her give a free rein to human nature; and let her depict the scenes and the people she knows, regardless of what pedants and ethnologists choose to infer or to assume. As for Mr Munro, let him bear in mind his own saying that time should be the property of every wise-like man, and let him not hasten to make heavy draughts upon his stock of material, handsome though his balance be. A thousand imitators may possibly spring up to vivisection the Gael; let him keep his own counsel, and bide his own time. Let him rigidly eschew even the suspicion of extravagance of expression; and let him—— But we feel that such warnings are presumptuous indeed; for Mr Munro has shown not merely rich promise but abundant performance.

DREAM-TRACKED IN THE TRANSVAAL.

It is a trite saying—you have heard it a thousand times—that truth is stranger than fiction. The facts which I am about to relate bear out the assertion; they are both true and strange. By a hard-headed, matter-of-fact man such as I am, not given to superstition, they would, if related by another, be received with more than the proverbial grain of salt.

I have heard it authoritatively asserted that we are all more or less mad; and I believe it. Those whom we meet daily during the ordinary routine of business, and take to be perfectly sane, are undoubtedly mad when they sleep—and dream. Is it not equally true that others, upon whom we look as demented, are sane—when asleep? Their dreams may be as rational as ours are the reverse. The lunatic for whom we provide an asylum is distraught by day, while you and I are so by night. How narrow, then, must be the boundary-line, how thin the partition, which divides the dreamer of day-dreams from the victim of chronic nightmare!

But though the *dénoûment* of the story which I am about to relate turns upon visions, yet I am myself chiefly interested in the curious mental affinity existing between twins, and which the circumstances tend to verify.

My brother and I saw the light within a few minutes of each other. I was the elder by a short interval. Our mother we never knew—she died some hours after our birth; and the solicitude of a devoted aunt filled the void which in boyhood we did not feel, having had no experience of maternal tenderness by which to gauge our loss.

We were happy as any boys similarly circumstanced could expect to be; and we were—as twins usually are—devoted to each other. Our father, when his wife died, was a young, strong-minded, and vigorous man. He was a clever draughtsman and engraver on wood, and earned an easy competence in the rising town of W—, chiefly by illustrating catalogues of machinery and mechanical contrivances, and also by broadsheet and picture advertisements. These latter he supplied in large quantities to towns in various parts of the country roundabout; while my aunt added to our financial resources by giving music-lessons to pupils belonging to the principal schools, of which there were several in and around W—.

We boys were as alike as twins could possibly be, in voice, figure, gesture, and feature; but all difficulty as to identification was obviated by the fact that I, the elder, had been disfigured from birth by a large blood-stain on the left cheek, which extended over the temple up to the roots of my hair. I mention this peculiarity, not from any morbid desire to dwell upon physical defects, but because it has a bearing upon subsequent events, and is therefore important.

My father took the greatest interest in our bringing up, devoting all his spare time in our early years to grounding us in the rudiments of education. As we grew, we advanced to a good local day-school, the advantages of which we supplemented by regular attendance at the School of Art. It was his earnest wish that we

should ultimately follow his trade and continue the business, in partnership, at his death. But the Fates were against this; and he was obliged to abandon the hope that George would ever settle down to work in the shop. In fact, we developed utterly different tastes. I became a very fair water-colour artist; and this talent my father encouraged and cultivated, as likely to be of great benefit to me in his particular line of work if—as he hoped—I should elect to follow in his footsteps. I did so elect. The bent of George was altogether towards mechanical engineering, and was so pronounced that it demanded and obtained recognition. During his apprenticeship, George and I still lived under the paternal roof; and for years we were only separated during business hours. We continued to be still, as it were, a part of each other's life.

I recall here a practical joke perpetrated by him on an occasion when I had been sent out of town for a two days' journey with a supply of coloured placards for distribution. Before setting out for home in the evening, after his day's work, he, with the assistance and connivance of a mutual acquaintance, succeeded in painting such a correct representation of my blood-stain on his own cheek and temple as to completely deceive my aunt, who received him on the threshold with the exclamation—

"My goodness, Arthur! Haven't you gone yet? I'm afraid your father will be very angry!"

When the colour was washed off, and he put in an appearance as George, and sent the unsuspecting woman up-stairs to find out why I, Arthur, did not answer when summoned to dinner, the joke had reached its climax.

When explained, it drew down a very severe reprimand from my father, which rankled in George's mind—the fact being that my father was a superstitiously reverential and religious man, who looked upon it as a sort of profane liberty, which Providence might justly resent, if he did not. It was the beginning of strife. George never forgot the unduly harsh words made use of, in a moment of excitement, by a parent who, nevertheless, loved both him and me with the most fervid affection. From this incident I fancy I may with certitude date the inclination to leave his home which took root and grew with my poor brother's years.

I did my best to induce him to comply with my father's wishes, but to no purpose. He hungered for a life of what he called freedom; he was bitten by the craze of the time—like many others: for just then nothing was talked of but the fortunes to be made in search for gold and precious stones.

Thus it came to pass that, three months or so after this, he went; having succeeded in obtaining an appointment as temporary assistant engineer—for one voyage—in a large steamer bound for Auckland. She was to touch at Delagoa Bay, where he hoped to drop on, or hear something of, a friend named Stannard, to whom he had written on chance. The captain of the ship was an old chum of my father, and promised to keep an eye on George, and to "steer him straight" as far as lay in his power. Nevertheless my heart sank at the prospect of separation, which now came upon me in the shape of a new sensation—a novel experience, undefined, and mysteriously vague.

George's farewell interview with

my father was sharp, short, decisive, and painful. Hot words passed between them, I had reason to know. He was charged in the heat of the moment with systematic ingratitude and disobedience; and he retaliated with the retort of having been, for years, misjudged and misunderstood. They parted unreconciled, though without any actual breach.

On the eve of departure George rallied me because of my downheartedness, and a foreboding which, despite all his efforts and my own, I could not shake off. I was inclined for a moment to think him hard and somewhat unfeeling—but only for a moment. He became more serious as the time grew short. Before he went away, we entered into a most solemn compact that whichever of us should die first, would—if it were at all possible—appear in spirit to the other, and leave the realms of the unknown, if only momentarily, to warn, to enlighten, or to exhort.

Our parting was a bitter one; and though he endeavoured manfully to conceal his emotion for a time, he broke down utterly under the strain at the last moment. Low spirits prevailed for a time; but my aunt, like a sensible woman as she was, kept on "never minding," until I gradually came round again. But my father began to cause us much anxiety, he took George's departure so long and so seriously to heart—in fact, he moped; there is no other word which so well expresses his condition for weeks. I was surprised at it, because I had judged him so unfairly, and had all along sided rather with George in thinking him unduly prejudiced.

I had, in early youth, read in some deep book a dissertation to prove a theory of compensation in

nature, which seemed to me absolutely conclusive. I have forgotten the name of the book and the author, while the settled conviction of the force of his reasoning remains; and my experience has confirmed its truth in many ways, up to the present time.

But Lottie Winn, who now came to live with us, deserves first place in lending confirmation to the theory. She was a kind of relation, the daughter of a very distant cousin of my father, and had filled the humble post of a shop-assistant in a distant town, coming to W—to fill a similar one at better pay. She was an artist in a sort of way—namely, a colourer of photographs and miniatures; by working at which in the evenings she was able to make a not inconsiderable addition to her weekly salary. This talent served as a common ground of mutual interest to start with.

I fell violently in love with her, as a matter of course, which was what my aunt wished, as she plainly told me; for there was nothing which she would like better, as she said, than to see me "comfortably settled"—a woman's phrase, which simply means "married." There was "no hurry," and it was better to "let things take their natural course with Lottie." So I did, and was content with the outlook.

But if I was happy in the prospect which lay before me, the result to my father was disastrous in one sense. In reality, he had never got over the shock of George's going away. He gradually sank, taking no exercise and no nourishment. My aunt at last grew seriously alarmed, and called in the doctor. He, good man, shook his head gravely, and spoke of a general break-up of the constitution; hinting that softening of the brain

was to be feared, and that matters were complicated by a long-standing disease of the heart, which might be fatal at any moment; though, without excitement of any violent kind, a man need not die of it till old age. There was nothing for it but care and quiet; so he said.

In due course I had a long letter from George, written in high spirits. He had struck up a warm friendship with a "rough customer," known in the Transvaal as Brummagem Jack, who gave him a most glowing account of the fortunes to be made in the gold-fields. The letter wound up by regretting that he was in honour bound to make the return voyage with his ship, as he had entered into a contract to do so; but intimated that his stay at home would be but brief.

Weeks shortened into days, and days into hours. The ship on her return voyage touched at Plymouth, and a telegram from George prepared us for his speedy advent. We were all three at breakfast when he burst in upon us. Fortunately my father had not come downstairs, and the sudden shock was spared him. After a warm embrace for aunt and me, George turned to Lottie, who was standing blushing and embarrassed at his side.

"Is this our cousin Miss Winn?" he asked.

My aunt nodded. "Yes," she said, "that's Lottie."

Instantaneously, impulsively and warmly, he kissed her. She flushed crimson, taken as she was by surprise, but she did not resent the action: I could see that clearly—I, who never had the temerity to venture on such familiarity, notwithstanding the many favourable opportunities I had had! It was humiliating! In one instant he

had succeeded where, after months, I had failed, or at least had made no certain advance; nor could I conceal from myself the conviction that the result was a foregone conclusion with Lottie. She could not help herself, even if she would. He must of a certainty capture the prize, for I was powerless to prevent him. My heart sank within me; and I felt towards this once-loved brother the beginning of a sensation which was very close to hate.

With a sense of temporary relief I saw Lottie off to her business; and while George went upstairs with my aunt to interview his father, I retired into my little workshop, and there nursed the fell dislike of him which had so recently taken possession of me. For a full half-hour I never moved except to refill and relight and resmoke my pipe. George came straight in when he was done with my father, and, drawing a chair after him, sat down opposite me at the other corner of the fender, just as he used to do of old.

Looking back now upon the scene after the lapse of many years, I feel humiliated and ashamed when I recall the part I played and the sequel.

He was the first to speak as he filled his pipe from my pouch, and while he lighted it turned half round and looked me straight in the face. I felt that his honest eyes were fixed upon me, though I did not look up.

"Arthur," he said, "there is some great change—what is it?" He paused, but I did not reply.

"Look here, old chap," he continued, "I'm not going to be long here; you might as well be jolly."

A weight was lifted from my heart by the assurance. God forgive me—I was glad! A few short months ago it was anguish

to part from him, and now I received the intelligence of his approaching departure with the keenest gratification, and I became friendly and apparently as affectionate as could be wished: at all events I deceived him. He unfolded all his plans and schemes, and took me fully into his confidence. All he wanted, he said, to ensure success in his project was ready money, and his interview with my father had been mainly to obtain it; but he did not prosper in his suit. My father was obdurate, or, as it appeared to George, callous, the fact really being that this new shock quite unhinged him, rendering him absolutely incapable of taking in the full bearing of George's schemes, while it did not preclude him from feeling the full force of what he harped upon—his son's base ingratitude.

All this incensed George, who resented the injustice of it. The result was that they parted again in anger, and George, feeling pity for his father's physical debility, resolved to seek no more favours at his hands, but made up his mind to leave home again as soon as possible.

"The question now is," he said to me, "how I am to obtain the needful supply! There are fellows out there who are realising fortunes simply by sitting still and purchasing diamonds and gold from the finders. It is a sort of smuggling and dangerous game: but a smart fellow can keep clear of the toils! My plan is to go into partnership with Brummagem Jack, who has bought a wayside shanty, and is going ahead like anything. He is a right-down good sort: no humbug about him—rather rough, to be sure, but that does not matter out there; and all I want is—like him—a fair start. He landed,

he told me, with a clear hundred in his pocket, and now he's worth a huge lot."

"Would one hundred suffice?" I asked, tentatively, and with an interest which I basely allowed him to set down to my brotherly solicitude.

"Well, it would; but of course I'd prefer more. I counted on getting, say, double that from the governor; but he cut up so rough all round that I have as much chance of ten as even one."

"You shall have the full amount, George—the two hundred," I said, starting up, and placing a hand with seeming affection on each of his shoulders. "I have it, and you are surely fully entitled to some share in the profits. There is no compliment in it," I went on, depreciating any expression of thanks. "I acknowledge your right to it—why should I not? If you had remained at home and taken to the business, you would have had half the earnings. You are sacrificing everything now—renouncing all claims, and I should never forgive myself if I refused you!"

I said much more in the same strain during a prolonged interview, and said it so warmly that—consummate hypocrite as I was—I not only deceived him but also myself, and actually indulged in a feeling of self-gratulation on my performance of a noble and generous action.

In two days everything was ready; and in that short time I had frequent opportunities of seeing how much interest his sayings and doings had for Lottie, and how essential his departure had become for my peace of mind. If he remained I felt that I should soon be transformed into a fiend! In justice to myself I must say that I fought hard against the devil that was in me; but I was racked

and torn by contending emotions—the most intense, passionate, and jealous love of this young girl, and the sore prickings of a conscience which would not let me rest.

On the third day he left us, full of hope and high spirits, poor fellow.

“I’ll come back again a rich man, Arthur,” he said, “to find you married to Lottie, and the father of a family. I’m not a lady’s man myself, and perhaps it’s just as well. Make me godfather to all the kids, and I’ll distribute my gains equally among them.”

He took it for granted that Lottie was to be mine, though we had not discussed the matter; and I did not dispute the assumption. He was not a marrying man. Was there, then, after all, no danger, and should I urge him to remain? Pooh! many men make the same protestation, but they cannot be trusted. It was utterly impossible, too, as it seemed to me, that he or anybody else could long resist the fascinations of Lottie Winn—to be near her was to burn!

I let him go—saw him off in the early hours of the morning by train to Liverpool. We stole out of the house noiselessly and secretly, without saying good-bye. I persuaded him that the shock might be fatal to my father, and would necessarily much upset the two women, without any corresponding advantage. The fact of it was, that I could not bear the idea of his again embracing Lottie, even to say farewell, or be answerable for the consequences either to myself or to him, so infatuated had I become. I did not feel safe until the train was actually in motion.

As we finally grasped each other’s hand a strange and sudden impulse seemed to take possession of both

at one and the same instant; and without any premeditation we, as if prompted by some mysterious agency, some occult power outside ourselves, took off and exchanged our rings. His was a red stone signet; mine was a gold hoop with a small diamond set in it; but, small and unpretending as it was, it played subsequently an important part.

After the train had left the station, I sat for a time on the platform alone, mechanically twisting the ring, which George had given me, round and round on my little finger. As I got up to depart, a glint of the rising sun, through the glass roof, fell on it, and with a shudder I thought how like to a big drop of blood the stone was. I tried to reason myself out of the feeling, but in vain. Had I not observed it for years worn by George without seeing this or finding any portent in it? True! but, all the same, now I could not bear it on my hand. I took it off furtively, and put it away into my waistcoat pocket; and, intending to look it up safely, I returned home with a feeling of depression at the heart which well-nigh prostrated me.

I had to make excuses and apology for George, and fortunately had to work exceedingly hard at some urgent orders which awaited execution, and which had been unduly delayed in consequence of the preparations for George’s departure. I had no time to brood. I put on the ring again, determined to get used to it, and to overcome the childishly superstitious feeling I had about it.

The parting with George was final. I never saw him again in the flesh. It was easy enough to convince my aunt that his sudden departure was planned out of pure goodness of heart, and to save her

unnecessary grief,—as undoubtedly it had been; but it was not so easy to satisfy Lottie, who pressed me hard for a full, true, and particular account of his last words—and this with a pertinacity which spoke volumes. Had he sent her no message—not even a word? I was glad, I confess, to be able truthfully to say he had not, and to hear her angrily exclaim, “How unkind!”

Henceforth I devoted myself to work. I could not bear the process of introspection, because, now that the danger was over, I began fully to realise the shabby if not morally criminal part which I had played in order to get George away.

Weeks passed rapidly, when, taking up the newspaper one morning at breakfast, my aunt turned suddenly pale and let it drop from her hands. There was evidently “something up.” Lottie seized the sheet, and, before I had time to look at it, announced with horror the fact that George’s ship had been run down in Delagoa Bay within sight of land, and that it was believed all on board had perished!

There was consternation, as a matter of course; and my repeated assurances that *George was not dead* fell on deaf ears, till at length, by iteration and by the confidence of my manner, an impression was produced. But how did I know? How could I know? I explained that I knew because of a solemn compact which had been entered into between us, to the effect that he who died first should appear to the other. They were horrified, and only half convinced. I prevailed upon them to say nothing to my father, but to wait a bit and see how the facts turned out.

With the tension of an awful uncertainty upon us, we went

about our several occupations. My father was becoming rapidly worse, and was in such a state as to need all my aunt’s care and solicitude; while Lottie had her business in the big haberdashery shop to attend to, and I fell to at my engraving with redoubled energy.

I worked late into the night. The block of the head of a “bearded lady” was before me, and I was cutting in for some deep shadows with the graving tool, when suddenly the bloodstone started from George’s ring, and, falling upon the floor, disappeared.

I shuddered, and a feeling something akin to the sensation produced by an electric shock passed through me. Recovering myself by a strong effort of will, I turned on all the gas jets in the workshop, and, on all fours, went in search of the stone, which at last I succeeded in finding. It had somehow got into the most distant and inaccessible corner, whence it shone like a fiery blood-red and evil eye. I secured it with a vague dread, and thrust it once more into my waistcoat pocket. As I rose from my creeping position a gust of warm wind passed by me—a rustling movement of the air—recalling those beautiful lines of Sheridan Knowles—

“A sound so fine,
That nothing lives ’twixt it and silence.”

I saw nothing, but the conviction forced itself upon me that my brother’s “angel” had passed by and fanned me with his pinions! George was not dead, but danger threatened him in some way unknown to me!

With an overwrought brain and nerves in tension, I went to bed. My rest was disturbed as a natural consequence, and out of a fitful slumber I awoke several times, but

towards early morning I at last fell into a profound sleep, and—dreamed.

I saw George and his companion, Brummagem Jack (for I concluded that it was he), together in a sort of wooden shanty, where they had taken refuge. It was a kind of rude lodging-house erected on the wayside, evidently in the most frequented track of the adventurers passing to and from the gold and diamond fields. The room in which they were stood out clearly and distinctly before me, to its minutest details, in my dream. I saw George walk up to the small window, consisting of a single pane of glass in the low gable wall; I saw him look out of it as if curious about the weather; I saw him shut it; and, finally, I saw him carelessly scratch his name and the date—Sept. 3—upon the pane, with the very diamond ring which I had given him in exchange for his. Then he filled his pipe, the same one which he had when starting, and sat down and smoked it, till, growing impatient, he roused his companion, who lay ready dressed upon the stretcher bed, on the corner of which my brother had seated himself. I heard the two talking, and watched them go out. I could even distinguish Brummagem Jack's voice as he haggled and swore at the proprietor of the primitive hostelry about the excessive amount of his charge for the scanty accommodation given. I heard the chink of the money, and I heard their footsteps as they walked away. I was preparing, in my dream, to follow them, when Brummagem Jack hastily returned for his revolver, which he had left under his pillow. I saw him carefully examine it, with a sinister expression on his evil countenance. There was nothing in the action, under the circumstances, and yet,

with the sentience given to a dreamer, I read in it, as plainly as could be read, George's doom—ay, as plainly as if the murderer had audibly acknowledged his fell intent.

In a wild frenzy and with outstretched hands I rushed, as I thought, towards my brother, and cried in my agony, "George! George! for Heaven's sake beware! Your comrade is a murderer! Come back! come back!" Then I awoke, and found myself standing on the floor of my room, with arms supplicatingly extended, beads of cold perspiration on my forehead, and—my dream ended.

So vivid and so clearly cut into my brain were all the details of the scene, that next day I brought my special talent into requisition, and made an accurate water-colour picture of the room—the window, the furniture, everything. I worked all out down to the minutest details, so that I should not only know the place again, but that, if need be, it might as easily be identified by any person who had actually seen it; for that it existed I had not the shadow of a doubt. But as I was unskilled in portrait taking, I did not even attempt to introduce Brummagem Jack. I myself would remember him and pick him out among a thousand—a short, thick-set, sallow-faced, black-haired, keen-eyed, utterly repulsive man, with eyebrows meeting over his nose, under an inch of forehead. How was it that such a fellow contrived to obtain so much influence over my brother? This was a surprise to me. I could not imagine any one taking to him, much less George doing so, with whom he could not have had a sentiment in common. We are, as a rule, I believe, attracted by our opposites among the other sex; but I have never heard that men

choose boon companions or friends by the same rule of contrary.

A vague fear haunted me. I knew that my brother was in danger, and I was powerless to help him—that was only too plain. I took my aunt and Lottie into my confidence. They had come to share my fears, and now watched with intensest interest the completion of this picture; yet what was to be done they knew not, any more than I. They watched and waited,—they could do no more.

Two nights later my worst fears were confirmed. It had just struck twelve, and I was preparing to retire, when I saw George standing opposite to me at the other end of the desk at which I had been writing. I saw him as clearly as I see the paper now before me, and the pen with which I write these words. Naturally I arose and attempted to detain him as he moved away; but my arm passed across and through his body as through a vapour or a cloud. When he reached the door he turned, and, pointing to his left temple, which was now full in view, he presented to my terrified gaze a fresh and reeking blood-stain exactly similar to my own in size and outline.

"Great God!" I exclaimed, in a hushed and awe-stricken voice. "It is as I feared! Speak to me, George—my brother! Murdered?"

He slowly moved his head as if in assent; and, with a look of mingled sorrow and tenderness, he vanished! The mark, which by a mysterious decree of Providence I bore through life, had been reproduced on him in death with marvellous accuracy by the hand of an assassin! It was indeed strange and awful.

The hour was late, as I said, and the house was still; why should I

disturb it? I went noiselessly to bed, resolved to wait and see what dreams might again do towards elucidating the mystery. To-morrow I doubted not but that I should know more; and I was not mistaken: George had been murdered. I did not witness the actual perpetration of the hideous deed; evidently it had taken place just before I fell asleep, for only at that moment did the revelation begin. But the exact locality of it I saw, just as I had previously seen the room in which George slept, and the writing on the window-pane. The place was a precipitous ravine topped by crags and thick brushwood, and formed in its centre the bed of a rushing river, by which was a sort of cave or natural shelter created by the overhanging rocks at one end. In my dream I walked rapidly down the steep declivity which formed an entrance to this valley, and soon found myself standing at the mouth of the cave.

There upon the greensward lay the dead body of my brother, the fresh blood streaming from a terrible bullet-wound in his left temple. Petrified with horror, I instinctively crouched behind a projecting rock as I detected the sound of footsteps behind me. I saw Brummagem Jack approach, loaded with an armful of brushwood; I saw him set vigorously to work at a shallow grave, draw the lifeless body into it, and then proceed to fill in the earth and pile up the brushwood over all. I saw him then on his knees setting a light to the pile, evidently with a view to obliterate any indications of the newness of his deed of blood. Suddenly the power of motion seemed to return. I could bear it no longer, and with a wild cry of agony and hate I sprang for-

ward to strangle him. In an instant my fingers were sunk into his throat; and, as I flung him backwards to the ground, I would have dashed his brains out with a burning brand snatched from my poor brother's funeral pyre, when I stumbled over him and fell—to find myself awake!

It was all as before a dream, and I lay prone on the floor of my bedroom, nervous, shaken, and bruised, but not seriously hurt. It was impossible to sleep again that night, and I remained awake, tortured by the conviction that George was indeed murdered, and that I had selfishly helped to kill him.

When morning broke I arose, and for a couple of hours worked sedulously at another water-colour—a reproduction of what I had again so mysteriously seen. Before the usual breakfast-time came round I had not only far advanced with the picture, but I had wound myself up into such a state of nervous excitement that I resolved, come what might, to have revenge for George's death. I became, in fact, a murderer in heart. Blood for blood, I said to myself; an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth. I would find out, hunt down, and kill Brummagem Jack, or I would perish in the attempt.

To carry out this fell purpose would necessitate a prolonged absence from home, and a journey which I confess I feared to face, so little did I know of the world or the vicissitudes of travel. I hated the sea, too. Nevertheless, I firmly resolved to face all dangers and risks for the accomplishment of my intent. I must of course first clear off all arrears of business, and this could not be done without loss of time—a fact which in my eagerness I deplored but could not alter.

While I sat turning all these things over in my mind, my aunt suddenly burst in upon me in a state of extraordinary agitation. "Arthur!" she exclaimed, "for Heaven's sake come with me! I do not understand your father. Something strange has happened." I obeyed, and followed her upstairs into the sick-room, with Lottie close behind us.

Without entering into unnecessarily harrowing details, suffice it to say that beyond all doubt since the previous night my father had completely lost his reason, and henceforth it became incumbent upon us to watch him night and day. From his incoherent ravings about George it was evident that he, like me, had seen something, and had obtained some mysterious insight into the terrible event which had upset myself. In his shattered state of health the result was likely to be fatal very soon, the doctor said; and after his visit I told the two women everything, and with awe-stricken conviction they acquiesced in the belief that George was indeed dead, and had been murdered by Brummagem Jack.

There was nothing for it now but to watch and tend my father, which we all three did with assiduous care. He lingered on for some weeks, during which time I not only contrived to finish all orders then in hand, but also completed the picture on which I was engaged of the scene of the crime. At an early stage of the manual labour connected with this work, when my memory or second-sight failed me, I made accidentally a curious discovery which facilitated its completion. I had been in the habit on these occasions of putting the sketch aside, in order that I might nightly "sleep on it," and thus renew my impressions; when,

one morning, having a slight touch of headache, I placed my elbows upon the desk in front of me, and leaning my head upon my hands, with the palms pressed against my eyelids, I found that the whole scene came back as in my dreams. In order to see beyond the natural limits of physical vision it was only necessary to exclude light by shutting my eyes; I need not wait to dream, and thus was able to make more rapid progress. As a matter of fact, too, my sleep became more natural, and I felt the advantage of less disturbed nights and quiet rest, which probably under the circumstances saved me from brain-fever, or a fate perhaps similar to my father's. He, poor man, still lingered on, until, after some days of stupor, he died.

Very soon after the funeral a letter arrived, addressed to him, and bearing a colonial postage-stamp. We opened it, after first looking at it and guessing and wondering who the writer could be. The handwriting was strange, but I surmised at once that it was that of Brummagem Jack, and so it proved to be. The letter ran as follows:—

“Sept. 1, 188—.

“DEAR SIR,—Most likely you saw in the English papers the foundering of the prince regent and the loss of all hands your son George was in her i did not know it till i reconised his dead boddy among 7 others that was washed ashore 3 days after and burried by me at my own expens which was not very much i trust the lord will suport you in your grate affliction and also your sorrowing Family.—Your obedient servant,

“JOHN TURNER.”

The letter staggered the two women; and after shedding many tears over it, they put to me the

possibility of my theories and convictions being unreliable and baseless, founded as they were on nothing more substantial than dreams. But no; this letter, so far from shaking my belief, confirmed me more than ever as to the absolute correctness of my conclusions. I turned to my diary and notes. The ship, according to the newspaper reports, went down on the 29th of August. The letter was dated the 1st September, and the post-mark bore the same date, showing that it had been written and despatched on the same day. But George was alive on the 3d of September, the day on which I saw him, in my dream, scratch his name upon the window. I would not permit myself to doubt this. The obvious conclusion to be drawn, therefore, from the facts was, that the murder was premeditated by this inhuman wretch, and that the letter was written on the 1st in order to allay suspicion amongst us at home: we would, the murderer thought, accept without question the death of George by drowning. And doubtless we should have done so had it not been for this mysteriously acquired insight which Providence had permitted to me.

I had now two other facts established by the dates. It was a three days' journey to the lonely shanty in which I first saw them together on 3d September; and as the scene at the grave was revealed to me on the night of the 5th, it was two days' journey farther on to the actual spot where my brother's body was to be found.

Nothing could turn me aside from the fixed determination which now took possession of me, —to have revenge—to kill this scoundrel. Come what might, I must hunt him down. In vain did my aunt and Lottie endeavour

to dissuade me : I would not listen. I settled my father's affairs—which were now my own—and arranged for the carrying on of my business by the engagement of a temporary assistant, whom I obtained by advertisement, securing his interest by the promise of permanent employment on my return, in the event of his good behaviour and efficiency during my absence, and the certainty of succeeding to my stock-in-trade and goodwill in the event of my death (taking care to provide an annuity for my aunt contingent upon the latter). Lottie would accept nothing, being, as she said, able to take care of herself, and feeling that she had no claim on me.

The parting was a heart-breaking wrench ; but it had to be faced. I did not disclose the terrible resolve with which I was setting out, the blood-hunger which possessed me—it would have served no good end to do so ; and I kept the secret closely locked in my own breast, feeling that it was not one to be revealed to a pair of highly emotional women.

My preparations for departure were soon made. I did not give my ardour any time to cool. The principal items of my outfit consisted of a pair of the best revolvers to be procured for money, and an ample supply of ball-cartridges to fit them. It is not necessary that I should tax the patience of the reader by entering into any further detail regarding this part of my story. I knew absolutely nothing of the country to which I was going, nor of the dangers and difficulties I was to encounter and surmount, and looked upon such considerations as being beneath my notice. I found myself associating on board the ship with a motley crowd representing every phase of character, every social

grade, and every nationality. It was a hell upon earth—or upon sea—while the voyage lasted, and I looked with longing eyes for land, and the prospect of being freed from it ; but I found on shore a state of things as bad, if not worse, because while at sea the vigorous courage of the captain and the united discipline of his crew kept the worst rowdies somewhat in awe and check, whilst on land there was no control, and one ran the risk of being robbed or murdered, or both, at every turn. Things are better now, I am told ; but in those days they could not well be worse. The railway does in twenty-four hours now what then a bullock-waggon took weeks to perform ; and the combined efforts of magistrates and police have wrought wonders. I write of some time ago—for I was a young man then.

But once ashore there was no time to be lost. I joined the first crowd of adventurers who were ready to make a start for the gold-fields, where I believed Stannard to be. I had written to him on the chance of his getting the letter and being on the look-out, but I saw nothing of him ; indeed if I had known anything about the geography of the country I would have saved myself the trouble and the disappointment. As a matter of fact, I learned later that he had left these gold-fields and gone at least a hundred miles inland, prospecting for diamonds in a new locality.

One cannot be long in a crowd without making acquaintance with some one for company's sake. I picked up with a genial Irishman named Sullivan, whose natural wit and rich Kerry brogue lent a charm and novelty to his conversation ; but there were other points about him which also induced me to cul-

tivate him. He knew the country, and was familiar with the different routes. He did not dig for gold, but got his share of it by trading in various necessities with those who did. His plan was, as he told me, when there was a rush to any particular spot, to follow it at a respectful distance, and settle down on the outskirts of it, and set up a temporary shop and house of call—leaving a younger brother in charge while he was away purchasing "stock." I took to him straight off. Instinctively I felt that he was a straightforward honest fellow, and that I was sure of his sympathy and interest in my story. I sought his confidence on the first halt, and, seated on the grass under the shade of some friendly foliage, I made a clean breast of it. With our pipes alight and out of sight and ear-shot of our companions, I told him all the circumstances as I have already related them. He listened with breathless attention till the end, then gazed at me steadily with a sort of awe, while he knocked the ashes out of his pipe, and with a pious ejaculation restored it to his pocket.

"Have you them pictures wid you, surr?" he inquired, as if seeking for confirmation of the strange facts which I had told him, but not liking to express a direct doubt of my veracity. "You'd hardly bring 'em so far."

"I'd hardly come without them," I replied, slinging the canvas knapsack off my shoulders as I spoke, and diving to the bottom of it. "I brought them in the hope that I might be able to identify the places by the aid of them, or find some one who could by their agency help me in my quest. Look at that, and see if you can make anything of it."

He took the sketch in both

hands, and held it at arm's length. I watched his face with curiosity. Then he turned it and stared at the blank side, just as you and I have done in the case of an unfamiliar handwriting on an envelope, seeking for a clue by postmark or seal. Then he handed it back.

"Well," he exclaimed, "that bates the divil intirely, so it does!"

"You recognise the place?" said I, in breathless anxiety.

"Bedad I do, and no mistake. Owld Shultz's best bedroom, sure enough, where he puts the gents to sleep that can afford to pay the robber his big price. You have it all as exact as you plaze—the bed and the step-ladder up, and the small windy-pane in the gable-ind. We'll be there to-morrow wid the help of God."

The news was welcome and exciting, and the result of my first experiment so encouraging and satisfactory, that I resolved to try my luck with the other picture. With tremulous fingers I unrolled it—the scene of the murder—and eagerly watched the effect as I held it open before Sullivan. Instantly he recognised it as Jackson's Wynd—a deep ravine, as he explained, on an old and unfrequented track to a discarded gold-field. It was "out of the way intirely," he informed me; but seeing how determined I was to find it, and to obtain the necessary confirmation of the murder of my poor brother, and, moreover, being deeply interested himself now in the curious circumstances of the case, he consented to act as my guide, and to see me through with it.

"It'll only be a couple of days round after all," he said, "and Con won't be unaisy till I get back, for he's used to disappoint-

ments. We'll lay in a stock of what light provisions we can carry at Shultz's store to-morrow, an' start wid the help of God. But, mind me, we'll have to rough it an' camp out, as there'll be no shanty or shelter to be had till we make off Turner's 'Hotel'—Brummagem Jack, they call him—as big a schoundhrill——” He got no time to finish the sentence.

“What!” I shouted, rushing eagerly at him, and with a hand on each shoulder fairly staggering him, physically as well as mentally, by my vehemence of action and manner. “You know him, then—the very man, the murderer of my brother George, he whom I have taken this long journey to find? The hand of Providence is clearly to be traced in this! It was not mere chance that threw you across my path, but Destiny! Stick to me, Sullivan! I have an account to settle with this ruffian before I go back to England. I can't go back till it is settled. Stick to me!”

“Bedad, I will—like wax! Here's my hand on it!” and thus the compact—absolutely disinterested on his part—was made; and loyally and faithfully he fulfilled his obligations.

We made no delay at Shultz's beyond what was absolutely necessary to identify the “best bedroom” in which George had slept, and his signature on the window-pane, which I pointed out to Sullivan. The superstitious or religious awe which had taken possession of him grew deeper; and when we started again, he was wound up to a pitch of excitement and enthusiasm equal to my own. He saw the finger of God, and believed himself to be now an instrument of the Divine Will. The incentive in his case was even stronger than the mere human one in mine.

We forged ahead, often silently for miles, doing snatches of sleep in the warm day-time, and walking through the nights, which were damp and cold. Looking back now, I often wonder how I survived those days and nights; but certain it is that I suffered no ill effects. Possibly, just as a drunken man may sleep unconsciously for hours in a roadside ditch with sleet and bitter winds around him, and awake sober and unharmed, so the mental intoxication by which I was wholly possessed kept up my vital energy. Sullivan was a hardy plant, and accustomed to rough it: I was very much the reverse, yet I bore the fatigue and exposure equally well. To my frequently repeated inquiries as to distance and the probable date of arriving at Jackson's Wynd, his replies were evasive, and practically came to nothing more than “all in good time.” He evidently had got into his head that I might go off mine with excitement as the hour approached, if I came to know it and count the minutes; and very likely there were some grounds for his fears, apparent to him and unsuspected by myself. There was nothing for it but to possess my soul in patience.

On the morning of the third day we found ourselves ascending a grassy slope. The sun shone out splendidly, showing us, as the early haze cleared away, a cresting of trees and scrub, under the shade of which Sullivan expressed his determination to cry halt for our breakfast, such as it was.

“We can't surely be very far off now?” I said, tentatively, as we stretched our weary limbs on the mossy sward.

“No,” he said, “not very. Take a nap now; and if it's a good wan, maybe we won't sleep again till we're there.”

This was all the satisfaction I could get out of him. Had I only guessed that a few minutes' walk would bring us to the longed-for spot, there would have been no halt—and this of course the wily Sullivan knew. He was afraid of the strain, as I afterwards learned, and wished to give nature a chance of recovering from the wear and tear before the coming crisis. In other words, he was afraid of a break-down.

I slept for fully three hours after my frugal meal, and rose like a giant refreshed. We pushed rapidly through the grove, and, coming on a rude track, followed it, till at last we stood clear of the brushwood and on the top of a steep declivity, which to my astonished gaze showed me in the valley beneath the original of my water-colour sketch—the scene of the murder—Jackson's Wynd.

With a wildly excited cry, leaving Sullivan behind, I rushed at full speed down into the valley, never halting for a moment till I found myself on my knees by the side of poor George's grave—if such a name could be given to it. There I found the expected heap of charred sticks, the remains of the fire which had been lighted by the inhuman wretch who killed him. When Sullivan arrived, he found me frantically clearing away the embers and tearing up the loose earth and grass. For the moment I believe I had lost my reason; and he evidently thought so, for with a grasp of iron he seized me by the collar, and by main force dragged me to my feet.

"Man alive!" he shouted, shaking me vigorously, "leave off that, or I'll have to go agin my inclination and do something desperate, I tell you! Is it a ghoul, or a vampire, or a haythin ye are—that ye want to be exposing the

remains of the dead wid your dirty fingers? Leave off! I say agin, an' let the poor boy rest aisy—may the Lord have mercy on his sowl!" And he reverentially uncovered as he loosed his hold.

I felt, as I recovered, ashamed and very justly reproved; but of a truth I was not really to blame, having been momentarily unhinged by excitement. His force of character saved me: looking back on the circumstances, I am fully convinced of this.

We spent the remainder of the day in raising a cairn over the lonely grave, placing on top a large flat stone, on which Sullivan contrived to rudely carve a cross with the blade of a big clasp-knife, which he carried both for use and defence. When our sad work was done, mutually and silently offering up a prayer, we departed.

A consuming thirst for vengeance now possessed me; and seeing the state of excitement under which I laboured, Sullivan, I presume, concluded that it would be safer to give a definite answer when I pressed him about the distance to Brummagem Jack's shanty: at all events, he gave one.

"We'll be there before ten o'clock to-night, wid the help of God," he said; and as if to pass the time, he entered into a detailed statement of the many crimes of which Turner was known to be, or suspected of having been, guilty, one of the most recent being the supposed murder of the late proprietor of the shanty, and the appropriation of the widow, with whom he had entered into occupation, and was now living. Nothing could be worse than the reputation which he had earned, and I felt a grim satisfaction in hoping that his fate was in my hands, and retribution drawing near. I did

not then speculate on the curious duality of character displayed by my companion—the mixture of religious reverence which he had already shown with regard to the dead, and the absence of moral compunction which he now exhibited in helping me to wreak vengeance on the living. He must have known that I contemplated murder; but doubtless to him this man was no better, and nothing more, than a wild beast. At all events I judged Sullivan leniently, if I judged him at all—in fact, I was worse than he was, for I had got to look upon my terrible mission as a sacred and praiseworthy duty.

Night closed in upon our fateful journey, and by the light of the brilliant stars we pressed steadily on. At last, after a weary and rugged tramp, we found ourselves in what appeared more like open country; and we got upon a track which, compared with that which we had lately traversed, might fairly be called a highroad. Following it for a mile or so, we reached a sudden bend, from the turn of which I caught sight of what was evidently an inhabited dwelling of some sort.

We were close upon it. I saw a streak of clearly defined light all round the badly fitting door which faced us; and at the side there shone out a wedge-shaped glare from a small window—thrown open probably for ventilation.

My heart stood still, and momentarily so did I. There was a shout of ribald laughter, and the din of many voices, the sound of which was distinctly audible. Instinctively I felt that we were within sight of the long-sought shanty of Jack Turner, and within reach of the murderer himself; there was no need to ask Sullivan, and he knew it. He didn't volun-

teer any information, but addressed himself to the exigencies of the situation forthwith.

"Don't be in anny hurry, now," he said—"take everything nice and aisy;" and he placed a restraining hand upon my shoulder as he spoke. "Stay where you are for wan minnit, while I have a look round."

He started off with quick and stealthy tread to reconnoitre; but I disobeyed his injunctions, and followed noiselessly and closely in his footsteps. I could not restrain the eagerness which impelled me—it was simply impossible. While he crept towards the door and peered through the chink, I made for the wedge of light, stooping under the edge of it, and keeping in the shade till I found myself under a small window, from which the glare proceeded. With a revolver in my right hand, and with my left upon the sill, I raised myself silently and cautiously, and looked in through the opening, which was so small as to be nearly blocked by my face.

Several men were seated round a rough structure which did duty for a table—drinking, smoking, and blaspheming; a rough lot apparently, card-playing for nuggets instead of money. Three dip-candles, flaring and guttering in black bottles, served for lamps. The noise was fearful, and the rush of foul and heated air was almost suffocating: its pungency blinded me momentarily, but I soon recovered, and rapidly took in the whole scene.

At the head of the table sat the man I sought. The repulsive evil countenance was none other than that of Jack Turner. I recognised him instantly. He had just won a pool, and was exultingly gathering in his gains with eager fingers, when some sudden movement of

mine or some subtle occult influence (for I was not conscious of motion) impelled him to look up, and direct his gaze to the open window. A dazed and terror-stricken horror came over him, for the blood-stained pallid face of his victim, with avid eyes, transfixed him where he sat. My position was not favourable for the deadly object I had in view,—this instantly occurred to me. I could not get a steady shot at him or be sure of my aim from where I stood. In a few seconds I was at the door; and forcibly and rudely pushing Sullivan aside, I lifted the latch and stood before the inmates—all this in far less time than it has taken to describe.

"Turner," I exclaimed, "I know you! I have found you at last—assassin—murderer! Your last hour is come!"

To him I appeared as one raised from the dead. In voice and aspect I seemed the very man whom he had basely done to death—the blood-stain on my temple horribly fresh. He started to his feet with a terrified cry, and with uplifted arms he staggered under the burden of his fear.

I raised my revolver and fired two point-blank shots in quick succession from where I stood. He fell face downwards, prone upon the rickety table in front of him. The glasses and the bottle-candlesticks tottered, rolled off, and were smashed; the lights were extinguished; the whole structure gave way and fell with a crash; the guests started to their feet, upsetting the forms on which they sat; and the place was in utter darkness and confusion in a moment.

Before I had time to determine upon any particular line of action, I felt myself grasped under the arm-pits from behind, and a pair of hands firmly locked across my

chest: then I was dragged violently backwards and out into the night. Sullivan had come to the rescue.

"Run now," he whispered, relaxing his hold after he had brought me several yards from the house,—
"run like ninety-nine blue devils, and follow me!"

I obeyed with a will. After him I went—up hill and down dale—fording streams and jumping rocks—voicelessly for at least three miles, the last few hundred yards of which were up a steep hill—till, exhausted, he flung himself upon the grass, and I followed his example. We lit our pipes and rested.

A revulsion of feeling came over me while I smoked; and I now felt horrified at the thought of the part which I had played. Henceforth I was myself a murderer! I gave expression to my thoughts in some such words as these, in response to Sullivan's efforts to rally me. He laughed—a big, deep, genuine laugh.

"Well, bedad," said he, "if that's what's troubling you, you may make your mind aisy, for the devil a worse shot ever handled a revolver! Shure you didn't hit him at all, good or bad! Not a drop of his ruffianly blood did you spill! It was the fright he got that killed him—skeered the life out of him."

"If I thought that," I replied, "it would be a heavy load off my mind."

"You may, then," he continued. "Only the noise would be dangerous where we are, I'd let you have two cracks at myself this very minnit, at the same distance!"

This was conclusive and consolatory at the time, though, looking back now at the statement, I can't help believing that it was made out of his kindness of heart,

and without sufficient warrant, merely to soothe my perturbed conscience: suffice it to say, it had the desired effect—for, no matter what strict moralists may assert, there is a vast difference between wishing to kill a man and actually shedding his blood. I was at all events greatly relieved and comforted by the assurance.

Unexpectedly at this juncture our thoughts and conversation were diverted into another channel. Far away below us, in the dim distance and darkness from which we had emerged, a big cloud of semi-luminous smoke became visible, which gradually grew into bright tongues of flame. Jack Turner's shanty was on fire! Doubtless the wild inebriate crew whom we left behind had first plundered and then set a light to it, with the dead man inside! I remembered how Turner had endeavoured to destroy all traces of his own dastardly crime by the same agency—fire; and now in all probability he himself lay under a heap of smouldering ashes, a blackened corpse, no friendly hand to bury him, no voice to breathe a prayer!

We sat and watched the blaze till it died quite out, and the moon was rising behind us; then, after a most refreshing pull at a flask which Sullivan had hitherto concealed, we started at a rapid pace for what he called "home."

The welcome which we received from his brother Con, when we arrived, was Irish—warm and genuine. The few days' rest which I enjoyed in their rude hut, which just then felt as comfortable as the best of hostelries, soon pulled me together, and I naturally began to think of my return. Among the diggers, before starting, I heard various accounts of the death of Turner, the

prevailing belief being that he had been killed by his boon companions, who, after perpetrating the deed, robbed and set fire to the place, and then decamped. Sullivan and I allowed things to rest at that, and showed no incredulity or scepticism. It was clear that the community was glad to be rid of Brummagem Jack.

I could not prevail upon Sullivan to accept any payment for his time, his trouble, or his hospitality; and seeing that I should only wound him by pressing money upon him, I did not do so. We parted with mutual regret, and his hearty "God-speed." I left him my name and address, and extracted from him a promise that if he should ever be in need of help or a friend he would look me up; and this he assured me he would do.

It is not necessary that I should prolong the story by going into the details of my return trip: suffice it to say that, after many vicissitudes, I reached the coast; and, taking the place of a sailor who had deserted for the diggings, I worked my way home in a sailing-ship.

I found my aunt and Lottie well and expectant, and my business so flourishing in the hands of my *locum tenens* that I arranged to take him into partnership.

It will be surmised that Lottie became my wife, but not, perhaps, that I became the father of twin boys, whom of course I named Arthur and George. Other children followed, sons and daughters in single file, and at present they number seven.

One night, my aunt was rocking the cradle containing the latest arrival, Lottie was busy preparing tea, and I was sitting over the fire reading the evening paper, when we were startled by a mod-

est knock at the hall-door. The girl who answered it came in with the information that a "man" was waiting in the hall, and wished to see me. I knew instinctively who he was; and giving directions that he was to be shown into the office, and the gas turned up, I soon followed.

Sullivan stood before me as I entered: I was not a bit surprised, but I was delighted, because somehow I felt that, now, it would be in some way in my power to requite him for the past.

The result of our interview was, that he has remained with me from that day to this; and if I were to part with him now there would be lamentation and woe among the children. To myself, as a business man, he is invaluable in a general way—always willing and ever faithful—worth his weight in gold. Things did not prosper with him, he said, after I left;

Con died, and he resolved to come home and follow his luck, which he declared I had carried away with me.

"But, surely," I said, laughing, "you are far too sensible a man to believe in luck?"

"Sinsible is it, surr? Bedad, I knew a man, born alongside of me—Tim Connor, God be good to him!—such a misfortunate craytur that nothing ever thruv with him. Wanst he made a 'scarecrow,' out of what he could spare of his clothes, to keep the rooks out of his oats. Well, after filling themselves till they could howld no more, they just fought like divils for foot-howld on the arrums of it, and mistook it for a perch! Sure, you wouldn't deny but Tim had the curse of bad luck on him?"

The anecdote was conclusive enough, and I have never argued the question with Sullivan since.

LECKY'S 'DEMOCRACY AND LIBERTY.'¹

THESE two volumes contain a complete encyclopædia of political information on subjects connected with the two great principles which it discusses. They treat a variety of questions with great fulness and in a spirit of judicial moderation. Unity is given to the work by its two guiding aims—first, to examine all modern forms of democracy with a view to illustrate its dangers and to show the nature of the safeguards which might diminish them; second, to show the proper limit of legislative interference on numerous subjects involving the exercise of personal freedom. These latter, which include Sunday legislation, gambling, the sale of intoxicating drinks, civil marriage, and divorce, are all examined in great detail and enlivened with curious information. It is impossible, however, to lay down any general rule on the limits of wise legislative interference. Even Mr Lecky gets no further than the sound doctrine that each case must be considered on its own merits and special circumstances. The interest of those chapters lies in the light thrown on the various detailed subjects with which they deal, or as illustrating the various ways in which the right of individual liberty must be modified in complex society by the correlative rights of the society to which the individual belongs. The main interest of the work as it bears on immediate and urgent politics lies in its treatment of the great question of that democracy which we have all agreed to enthrone in

these islands, viewed in regard to the past, the present, and the future.

As regards the past, which is of course the least important, because the most irremediable, of the three, we find nothing in this book which approves the haste and rapidity with which political power has been displaced and transformed in these islands. Both parties in the State are in our judgment equally responsible for it. Parliamentary representation before 1832 had become unequal and anomalous to the last degree. The growth of new centres of population had been stimulated by manufacturing inventions and increasing industry and wealth. Old centres of power had been depleted and new centres created; in fact, parliamentary representation was arranged on a system applicable to a state of things existing in a remote past, and wholly inapplicable to the needs of the time. Royal prerogative in former times could effect all necessary changes, but had become obsolete, and an Act of Parliament was the only mode of dealing with the emergency. Pitt in 1783, and Lord John Russell in 1820-1830, endeavoured to deal with it; but the French Revolution and its consequences—viz., aversion to political change, and above all to an extended suffrage, whose first experiment had been so disastrous—indisposed the nation to adopt even the most moderate correctives of the existing system. A storm of fury at last arose, inspired by the French Revolution of 1830, and stimulated

¹ *Democracy and Liberty*. By W. E. H. Lecky. 2 vols. London: Longmans, Green, & Co. 1896.

by all the arts of agitation which O'Connell had employed to carry Catholic emancipation. It was met by defiance from both Wellington and Peel, and in the result the alternative lay between civil war and a measure which was far more sweeping than its authors had originally dreamed of. The Act of 1832 was the final outcome of political convulsion rather than of matured and well-considered statesmanship. It effected a complete displacement of political power, the middle classes ousted the aristocracy, and in the inevitable sequence of events were themselves ousted by the working classes in 1867; while in 1885 democracy, or the government by numbers, without regard to intelligence, education, or property, was finally established, far more speedily and with less of gradually acquired aptitude for their duties than might have resulted if the first beginnings of change had been more wisely considered.

Mr Lecky's genuinely Whig criticism on the short-lived constitution which existed from 1832 to 1867 is that the world has never seen a better. "Very few parliamentary Governments," he says, "have included more talent or represented more faithfully the various interests and opinions of a great nation, or maintained under many trying circumstances a higher level of political purity and patriotism." "The constituencies at this time," he adds, "coincided very substantially with the area of public opinion"; in other words, the multitudes who have no opinions were excluded from votes. It was the thirty-five years of middle-class ascendancy, with its devotion to Whig leaders, whom it installed in power for nearly thirty of those years, its implicit confidence in men whose station commanded re-

spect and whose Liberalism was cautious and prudent. Everything would have been for the best in their eyes if Whig tenure of office could have been renewed when occasion demanded by successive small increases of the electoral body, which should enlarge the following of one side, and augment the odium which attached to the blind resisters of change. This agreeable programme was dissolved in 1867 by the Conservatives taking the whole subject into their own hands and establishing a system of representation which at least tried to connect the privilege of the franchise with the discharge of the duties of citizenship.

The measure of 1867 was sooner or later inevitable, and apparently involved as its sequel the measure of 1885, which was carried by the assent of both parties in the State. Its best defence is that the course of events had rendered it too in its turn inevitable. Rousseau's doctrine of the omnipotence of numbers and the superior virtue of political equality has triumphed. Masses of ignorant or influenced voters have been called in to swamp all varieties of genuine opinion. We have constituencies whose course on any given occasion cannot be foretold, which are liable to be swayed by capricious impulses and unreasoning fluctuations of sentiment, but whose power is absolute as compared with the constituencies of those countries which possess written constitutions. The only checks which can prevent or mitigate a rash mandate from them lie in the cumbrous parliamentary machinery whose function it is to give effect to their decisions. That machinery is clogged by the intense loquacity of the representatives who are trained to a facility in talk during their several "campaigns," by the intrigues which

arise in a numerous body of 670 men all with their own purposes in view, by the suspensive veto of the House of Lords, which can always insist on the constituencies reconsidering their decision. The problem is how to ensure that increased ignorance in the elective body shall produce increased capacity for good government and legislation in the representative body. A large part of practical politics is devoted to the art of collecting votes, for which the landlord, the priest, the publican, and the local agitator are the most effective instruments: in Ireland illiterate voters, more than one in five of whom are professedly unable to read the names on the ballot-papers, are driven to the poll by agitators or priests. This degradation of the Irish suffrage in particular was agreed to by both parties, who well knew that its effect would be to throw still greater power into the hands of a poor, ignorant, and disaffected peasantry, and largely increase the party of Mr Parnell and his associates, who, to the knowledge of the whole country, were "marching through plunder to the disintegration of the empire." The verdict with regard to the past must be that Great Britain has advisedly and deliberately chosen to vest its voting power in the hands of the masses, however uninstructed they may be, probably under the idea, said to have been largely entertained both by Louis Napoleon and Lord Beaconsfield, that by adopting a very low suffrage you are enabled to penetrate below the region where crotchets and experiments and crude utopias and habitual restlessness prevail, and to reach the strong settled habits, the enduring tendencies, the deep conservative instincts of the na-

tion. Let us hope that those eminent men were right. At present the experience of ten years of its working leads, on the one hand, to the belief that the tone of public life has been lowered, that the character of the House of Commons has undergone a change for the worse, and that public men are becoming more shameless in their tergiversations and in their regard both to personal and public character. On the other hand, the actual decision of the new constituencies on the subjects hitherto presented to them has shown that those Radical politicians who have aspired especially to lead them have misinterpreted their character, and will probably have to transform their own methods and their own aims if they are ever to become the effective depositaries of political power.

The model of wise democracy which the devotees of extended suffrage propounded was one in which the voters were all wise and the leaders virtuous. Questions were to be thrashed out on the public platform, and when the public mind was sufficiently educated a Ministry was to come into existence to carry out the decrees of an enlightened public opinion. An honest Radical policy, worked out in the light of day by a process which involved the education of the voters, would at least have ensured an extended area of deliberative power, and the conclusions so reached might have been as wise as the nature of things permitted. But Mr Gladstone's antecedents did not mark him out as the kind of leader required to usher in a democracy in that spirit. His view of the duties of leadership involved a widely different procedure from frank, open disclosure and interchange

of opinion. In his sudden dissolution of 1874, with its unexpected offer to the class of voters whom he knew to be most disaffected to him to abolish their income-tax, he had shown that he was by no means averse to stratagem and surprise, and that class bribery, "cheap, easy, and not illegal," was in his opinion a permissible weapon in party warfare. In his Irish policy he had proved himself the unrivalled coercionist of Ireland, and had locked up hundreds of men, including Parnell himself, without trial. But notwithstanding his violent denunciations of those men and their leaders in public, he afterwards parted with his Irish Secretary and remodelled his policy on the lines of the Kilmainham treaty, the germ of the subsequent alliance between Radicals and Home Rulers. It was not therefore to be expected that democracy, ushered in by this particular leader, would be initiated into the frank and above-board developments of its policy, which its more philosophic devotees had desired. But when the new election of 1885 actually took place, with its 85 Parnellites sent up to Parliament as the first-fruits of a lowered suffrage, the course adopted by Mr Gladstone confounded all speculation. Nothing *simile aut secundum* had ever before taken place in parliamentary history, and probably never will. The leader actually appealed to the constituencies to give him a majority independent of these 85 votes, so as to save him and his party from temptation; and not getting it, he at once, without any hesitation, without consultation with his colleagues, coalesced with the very men whom he had denounced, and some of whom he had imprisoned for "marching

through plunder to the disintegration of the empire." The coalition of Fox and Lord North repelled our forefathers; but at least it was a coalition between statesmen who had taken violently antagonistic sides in a controversy which was a thing of the past, buried and out of sight, and which did not incapacitate them from patriotic agreement upon the questions of the future. The coalition between Mr Gladstone and Parnell involved the surrender of every conviction which down to that point the former had cherished on questions of future policy involving British safety, honour, and prosperity. It involved also the connivance at methods which the latter and his colleagues had uniformly employed to further their schemes, and which a later Commission tersely described as persisting in indirect incitements to crime and outrage, with knowledge of their effects. Under such leadership the new democracy was taught, or attempted to be taught, that so long as a scheme could be rushed through Parliament to the personal triumph of its author, it was immaterial what ultimate ruin it involved to the best interests of the country; that crime itself was a useful adjunct of political agitation; and that so far as its purpose was political it stood in a class by itself, and was not to be dealt with by the criminal law. It is impossible to conceive of democracy being ushered into existence under worse auspices.

When we remember the disclosures of the Parnell Commission, the boycotting, the plan of campaign, the open advocacy of public plunder, the connection with American dynamiters, the concealment of its accounts, the cruelty and oppression which were traceable to the Irish Land League,

it is appalling to think of what might have been the consequences of placing the newly enthroned democracy under the dominion of the Parnellites, and that we only escaped those consequences because the new democracy turned out to have more honesty, common-sense, and sound judgment than those who undertook its education. When we recollect that this ill-omened union between the Irish Land Leaguers and the Gladstonian Radicals was not merely surrounded by all the glamour which attached to Mr Gladstone's name, but was also blessed by Catholic priests in Ireland, Nonconformist divines in England, and Presbyterian ministers in Scotland, its utter failure is very remarkable. Its author did not succeed in wrecking his country — he only wrecked his party and his reputation.

Mr Lecky remarks that, assuming the truth of Herbert Spencer's dictum that "the end which the statesman should keep in view as higher than all other ends is the formation of character," democracy has proved a specially weak instrument for securing it. With wise forethought the founders of the American constitution withdrew from the jurisdiction of a chance and hastily snatched majority (which probably is all that we have to fear) several vital and fundamental principles. Their Legislature cannot legislate in violation of existing contracts; if it did, the Supreme Court has authority to disallow the legislation. It cannot infringe any fundamental liberty of the people or carry any constitutional change except under conditions which provide for the assent of the State legislatures and a two-thirds majority of both Houses of Congress. In short, all the rights which men value the

most are placed beyond the reach of a tyrannical majority; private property cannot be taken without compensation; even graduated taxation is provided against. In England a bare parliamentary majority is capable, with the assent of the Crown, of carrying out any constitutional change however revolutionary, of embarking on any scheme of spoliation, and even, as in the time of the Tudors, of passing Acts of attainder and confiscation. The only security against the adoption of such measures, apart from the cumbrous machinery of parliamentary action which provides opportunity for reconsideration, lies in the character of public men and in the ideas of political morality which prevail in the constituencies. From this point of view the increasing number of private scandals amongst members of Parliament which has followed the advent of democracy, of acts of financial dishonesty, of shameless apostasies, of class bribes, of insincere pledges, and of agreements to support one another's schemes irrespective of the public advantage, is a serious sign of the times. And amongst the constituencies the deliberate indifference with which a long course of habitual cruelty and persecution in Ireland was regarded even by the religious leaders was brought into grotesque prominence by an outcry of pharisaic horror when it was discovered that the Irish leader was at last convicted of having broken, in his private capacity, the seventh commandment. The whole Liberal party rose in the House of Commons by way of a demonstration of party triumph when one out of innumerable charges against him before the Parnell Commission broke down; and the same party, in deference to the Nonconformist conscience, drove him from public

life with remorseless determination when a private scandal in the Divorce Court, of no exceptional turpitude, and involving no political consequences, gave a convenient opportunity.

If the alliance of 1886 was of the worst possible import in ushering in the new democracy, that year also presented a spectacle of a totally different kind, and one which is of the best promise for the future. A large body of public men, several of them of the highest political eminence, at once dissociated themselves from the rash act of their leader. They broke the ties of party allegiance, and sacrificed without hesitation their political ambition and their party pre-eminence, rather than take part in an unprecedented scene, one which will stand in parliamentary history as the most flagrant in its character and the most dangerous in its possible or even its obvious consequences that was ever enacted. With regard to those who remained, it has been consoling to see that even men of the first eminence may sacrifice character and consistency without obtaining the rewards which they anticipated. It was another feature of that year, that first the House of Commons and afterwards the constituencies decisively rejected the scheme which had been propounded and the disastrous coalition by which it had been supported. Six years of Conservative administration followed.

Thanks to the energy of the 'Times,' which strained its resources for that purpose in a way which has never yet been suitably acknowledged by the public, the whole tale of Irish oppression at the hands of Irish agitators was unfolded in open court by its victims, and the conduct of its perpetrators received judicial con-

demnation. Home Rulers, on the other hand, were reduced to the necessity of a Newcastle programme, a scheme ingeniously devised to conciliate support to Irish policy by promises attractive on other grounds to English and Scotch voters. Every one of them was conditioned on Irish legislation having the precedence, and on that condition every one of those promises was impossible of fulfilment. The year 1892 witnessed, as a result of this programme, and of that swing of the pendulum which successive elections since 1867 have manifested, the reinstallation of Mr Gladstone in office. And a most fortunate circumstance it proved to be. The decision of 1886 had been far and wide represented as a hasty one, and it was desirable that the eminent author of the new Irish policy, who derived such pre-eminent authority from his transcendent abilities and long experience, should have a full opportunity of unfolding his reconsidered scheme, and of showing to the world how far it could be recognised as practicable. The Government had a sufficient majority to ensure its passing the Commons whatever its terms, so long as the Irish party supported them. To gain that support they stuck at nothing. They even consented that while Great Britain should abandon all effective control over Irish affairs, the Irish should send a contingent of 80 members to Westminster to hold there the balance between parties, and practically preside over legislation by which they themselves would not be affected. It was a provision to place, so far as legislation could do it, Great Britain under the yoke of the Irish. Every reasonable man knew that such a provision could never pass

into law. But the remarkable thing is that the Gladstonian party voted for it to a man. There sat the aged leader, well over fourscore, with his hand to his ear listening to the whole public debate. There is my bill, he seemed to mutter, say a good word for it if you can; but at any rate there is my bill, and vote for it you must: at the close of my career I will have it at least pass the Commons, and I am indifferent in what shape. It is the most striking instance that has yet occurred of members voting in obedience to the party Whip, and without the slightest reference to their own convictions. Probably the feeling was strong that the House of Lords would throw it out, and that the tenacity with which Mr Gladstone adhered to his scheme, determined that, closed in departments and remodelled by the Irish, it should at least pass the House of Commons, should be humoured as the closing act of a great career. Such is the levity with which a democratic House may deal with the vital interests of the nation. The general assent to the sweeping majority of the Lords which shortly afterwards threw out the bill, resisting every invitation of Ministers themselves to remodel it from end to end, the utter abandonment of the project both in public and private which has followed, both show as plainly as possible the total insincerity of support with which the measure was passed through the House of Commons. Mr Gladstone, it was understood, would have gone to the country upon his bill, but his colleagues apparently had had enough of it, and under cover of a demonstration against the House of Lords were disposed to shelve the question of Home Rule, and

resort to those remarkable proceedings which were tersely described as ploughing the sea-shore in order to fill up the cup.

Those, however, are incidents of temporary and fleeting importance. But it is impossible to overestimate the advantages which we owe to the election of 1892, that the whole scheme of Home Rule has been unfolded on the matchless authority of its author, that it cannot be now presented to constituencies as the embodiment of experienced wisdom which Mr Gladstone was prevented by old age and party perversity from laying before a public which had followed him in blind confidence for a whole generation, and had watched his career with enthusiasm and admiration for sixty years. The bubble was blown to its full dimensions and burst in the lifetime of its author, and it will puzzle the capacities of lesser men to recall it to existence after its conspicuous and portentous failure. The storm of disaster which eventually overtook the whole Gladstonian party at the polls ratified the decisive rejection of the Gladstonian policy, and shows that whatever may be the perils of democracy in general, the British variety of that unintelligible institution at least is sound. In the first ten years of its power it has carefully examined the claims and the projects of its self-constituted leaders, and has rejected them and their author in a manner which must suggest the necessity of a higher appreciation of its character and a wiser selection of expedients wherewith to obtain its confidence.

On a broad review of these first ten years the total result is encouraging, while the details create misgiving. It may be that, as Mr Lecky observes, pure democracy is

one of the least representative of governments, and that a growing distrust of representative bodies has become a feature of the time. Under it the best life and energy of a nation flow habitually apart from politics, and neither its politicians nor its political life afford worthy illustrations of its genuine character. As public men and public life in England deteriorate, as the higher classes in rank and intelligence, if not in wealth, retire from public life and are succeeded by the purely professional politicians, the present unlimited power of Parliament, as compared with the very limited authority of those Congresses which are restricted by written constitutions, will become more and more of a snare. Various clauses of the Home Rule Bill went to the very root of the British constitution, were in competent opinion fraught with the greatest peril to the empire, condemned by a vast preponderance of opinion, but were forced through the representative, or at least the elected, House. What is called the one-man power, that power which is the prize of success in public life, was one of the causes. Success of that kind is most readily attained by associating your name with some exercise of parliamentary omnipotence. Mr Gladstone has had an unusually long list of such achievements. He has disestablished Churches, plundered landlords, remodelled fiscal arrangements, and tried his hand at the pacification of Ireland. Other men, destitute of real constructive ability, are at least capable of lowering a suffrage or attacking an institution. There is no easier mode of building up a conspicuous and noisy reputation. It is the established process by which one leading statesman bids against another. When Mr Disraeli carried house-

hold suffrage in 1867, Mr Gladstone immediately outbid him on the eve of the election by proposing to disestablish the Irish Church. When Sir W. Harcourt placed himself, according to Lord Rosebery, in the forefront of financiers by his graduated death duties, the latter at once endeavoured to secure his ascendancy by leading a crusade against the House of Lords, masquerading in the mantle which Mr Gladstone had thrown from him in his last speech in the House of Commons. The attack was delivered with a good deal of vigour, but it failed so utterly with the country that his chief lieutenant was emboldened to refuse it a discussion in the Commons, and quietly shelved it. It is a necessary accompaniment of the one-man power that the rank and file are more and more reduced to a dead level, disregarded and closed, and left to indulge amongst themselves in scenes of coarse insult, of deliberate obstruction, and of violence, which on one remarkable occasion culminated in actual blows.

The division of parties into groups is another result of the degradation of the suffrage reacting on the House. Different sections which by combining may overthrow a Government, command their price in the political market, but interfere with the working, as hitherto, of two strong party organisations. For the time that evil, with its log-rolling practices, has been suspended or thrown into the shade by the unprecedented majority which the country has recently sent up to achieve the destruction of recent Radical policy.

This decadence of Parliament, which seems to be the necessary result of a more ignorant electorate, need not imply a decadence of

national character. Mr Lecky examines this question with the result that he considers that English character is steadily improving. Crime has diminished in proportion to population, and its sources have to some extent been removed. The poor have improved in decorum, civilisation, and humanity. The spirit of providence has grown, as the savings-banks testify. Artisans have become an intelligent and orderly element in English life. The spirit of humanity has largely increased, particularly that form of it which seeks out suffering, as long as it is not political, in order to relieve it. Philanthropy and all its works are widespread, and many people have no other occupation. The English people have not deteriorated, at all events, in military daring and endurance, or in love of field sports or in governing qualities, which latter have not merely the wide field of the Indian empire, but have recently been displayed with conspicuous success in Egypt, in the rescue of that country from a veritable Slough of Despond and placing it before Europe as one of the best administered countries in the world. The munificent and public-spirited management of our great towns in such way as to avoid the corruption which is the disgrace of American municipalities, and to avoid also the subordination to the metropolis, which is the feature of French life, show that the qualities which successful self-government require still exist in abundance.

The future of democracy is a problem which only time can solve. All that we can do is to endeavour to estimate the dangers which even its most resolute admirers admit to exist, and to consider in what way they may be

alleviated. It does not ensure better parliamentary government or greater liberty of action. It seems to have an incurable tendency to weaken both the one and the other. It has an unmistakable disposition to authoritative regulation even down to minute details. The great majority of the democracies of the world are hostile to free trade, all of them seem to be hostile to free contract. Trade-union regulations are brought into play to restrict the amount of work which a man may do and its produce, and to bring the principle of legal compulsion to bear upon every branch of industry. The functions of the State are everywhere sought to be increased with corresponding expenditure, till taxes and rates have increased, are increasing, and, in the opinion at all events of those who pay them, ought to be diminished. Mr Lecky points out in detail how we are advancing to a state in which one class will impose the taxes and another will be mainly compelled to pay them, a state of things which is fatal both to property and to honesty. The whole drift of democratic government, he adds, is to diminish or destroy the control which property in England once had over taxation. All must admit that if so, it is a most entire abrogation of those constitutional rights for which our forefathers struggled.

It is only, however, at the centre of power that we can look at the present moment, and at the securities which might there be provided against that which is the greatest danger which confronts us, the danger which swallows up all smaller ones, of a chance majority suddenly involving us in disaster. One security would be the diminution of Irish representation and the better distribution of seats in Ireland. Parliament has long

shown itself incompetent to refuse any serious claim for votes, for neither party in the State will incur the odium of refusal, or give to its rival an extension of probable support. The dangers in that direction have been mostly in the past; what remains is to complete the task of distribution of seats and the limitation of the number of representatives. Ireland has twenty-three seats in excess of its due proportion, regarded from the point of view of numbers alone,—more than that excess if numbers and taxation are combined. The schedule to the last Home Rule Bill admitted eighty to be sufficient. The excess, too, is mainly in the disloyal part of Ireland. At any given moment a general election may occur which will place the Government of the day under the dominion of the Irish vote, and it ought to be provided that that vote should not be vastly in excess of its legitimate strength. Measures which both England and Scotland disapprove and resist can readily be carried by the Irish vote, often on subjects which do not affect the Irish in the slightest degree. The graduated death duties of Sir William Harcourt, for instance, might have been demonstrated over and over again in the last Parliament to be contrary to sound principles of finance, but it is idle to suggest that votes would have been gained. Another suggestion for security is proportionate representation, but from that discussion the public mind has somehow or other always revolted. Plural voting is another expedient, but it is difficult to believe that it would have any very great effect, if it were merely as at present that men with property in different localities may vote in all of them. The fancy franchises of

Mr Disraeli's Reform Bill of 1859 might be revived with advantage, for they were all favourable to intelligence, education, property, and frugality. And it might at least be provided that those voters who could neither read nor write sufficiently to conduct their own business at the polling-booth should be relieved, if not of the franchise, at least of all assistance in exercising it as an interference with that secrecy which the ballot was designed to secure. The tendency of political thought at the present day is not in favour of these expedients; but a rude awakening may possibly result when the consequences unfold themselves of dissociating power from property, and of giving to the many an unlimited power of confiscating by taxation and rating the possessions of a comparatively few.

Mr Lecky seems to rely on two expedients in particular for placing adequate restraints on the capricious exercise of democratic power. No one in these days would talk of impeding its real will on any subject when once clearly ascertained. Those two expedients are the referendum and the reform of the House of Lords.

It is useless to speculate on the probable aims of democracy, whether it is favourable to religious liberty, to the maintenance of empire, to the preservation of property, to the spread of education, to free contract and free labour, or not. Time will show. In our own belief there is no reason to lose confidence in the genius and destiny of the British people on account of an extended suffrage, if only precautions are taken to ensure that the judgment finally acted upon shall be matured and not the offspring of temporary excitement or caprice. There are in existence already several guar-

antees that such shall be the case ; first and foremost the authority of the House of Lords, which, even if it preserves the hereditary principle as the exclusive, or almost the exclusive, basis on which it rests, will nevertheless retain both the power and the will to prevent disastrous hurry in legislation. Still the aim of all Conservative politicians should be to try and establish some such lasting securities against irretrievable injury to the dearest interests of mankind which the far-seeing founders of American democracy so wisely provided. An Act of Parliament, for instance, which provided that, on the subjects which those founders withdrew from the jurisdiction of caprice, two-thirds majorities in both Houses should be required, is one which could, when once passed, only be repealed with the consent of the House of Lords, and might answer all practical purposes. It would, like a perpetual Coercion Act, be repealable, and it would not be quite the equivalent of the complicated impediments which American democracy interposes between any sudden and ill-considered resolution and its execution, but it might be sufficiently effective in the absence of other and better expedients.

The Swiss referendum, for instance, establishes the electorate as a final court of appeal on any question of constitutional revision, so that a direct popular vote directed to a single issue is necessary before the fundamental institutions of the country can be tampered with. The inconvenience of this plan lies in the probable extension of its scope, the probable multiplication of the subjects to which it will be made to apply. In Switzerland it was in 1874 extended to all Federal laws and decrees not of an urgent nature

if 30,000 qualified voters or eight cantons demanded it. In practice it has been found that the popular vote, when it extends over the entire Confederation, more frequently negatives than ratifies the measures submitted to it,—another instance of the conservative temper of democracies unless when temporary excitement overbalances its judgment. The tendencies exhibited in the collected examples of the Swiss referendum results are a dislike to large expenditure, a dislike to centralisation, a dislike to violent innovation. Graduated taxation is one of the innovations which has been rejected by the popular vote.

In America the referendum has also been extended in its application, the tendency in State politics being in favour of substituting direct popular legislation for legislation through the medium of representative bodies. But the reason is that State legislatures are corrupt, and public safety requires that their power of imposing taxes and of incurring debts and expenditure should be strictly limited. Wire-pulling, jobbery, and corruption, which seem to be the inevitable characteristics of small local legislatures, are found in practice to be best provided against by intrusting legislation to conventions specially elected for a particular purpose, empowered to pass particular laws, subject to ratification by a popular vote. We have not reached that point yet in Great Britain. Local bodies, like the London School Board, may be extravagant, but it is the extravagance of faddists devoted to a particular subject to the exclusion of all else ; there is no evidence that it is the waste of corruption. The only object in view in resorting to a referendum in Great Britain would be to render

it impossible to carry constitutional and other fundamental changes without the direct and deliberate assent of the people. There is no necessity for making legislation in general by the representative bodies subject to ratification. And it is not impossible, one would think, to provide the required restraint without resorting to a device which, if once introduced, might be indefinitely extended, to the no small inconvenience of public business.

Mr Lecky writes decidedly in its favour. He thinks it would increase the power of the House of Lords for the purpose of restraining the despotism of the Commons. It would enable the electorate to give its deliberate opinion not on men, but on measures; not on a crowd of measures all submitted at one time, but on one capital measure selected from all the rest. He considers that it would lower the authority of the House of Commons, which he evidently regards as at present too much uncontrolled and unbalanced. The principle of a referendum is that of enabling a democracy to find its own remedy, to provide its own restraints. The experience, he adds, of both America and Switzerland shows that "when the referendum takes root in a country it takes political questions to an immense degree out of the hands of wire-pullers, and makes it possible to decide them mainly, though not perhaps wholly, on their merits, without producing a change of Government or of party predominance." In our view the introduction of this expedient would constitute a most radical change in the Government of the country, and the working of the parliamentary machinery under a democracy does not at present stand sufficiently condemned to require it. The House

of Commons is losing its moral authority and its hold over the masses as it is. The authority of the House of Lords will probably rise as the other declines, and its power for the purpose of checking caprice has been immeasurably strengthened by the universal ratification of the vote which destroyed the Home Rule Bill. In the last resort, if the circumstances did not warrant the complete rejection of a measure which it deemed to be disastrous, it could make its assent provisional—that is, subject to a referendum which would be a condition precedent to its assent taking effect.

Looking back on English politics, it would be difficult to point to an instance where a referendum would have been in recent times wisely resorted to, except perhaps on the two great questions of Irish land legislation and Sir W. Harcourt's graduated death duties. On both of those subjects, involving as they did the principle of confiscation, the existence of an appeal to a popular vote might have encouraged the House of Lords to withhold its assent. But both schemes were too complicated to have been a fit subject of reference. Its introduction would probably increase the suspensive power of the House of Lords, and force to the front the very difficult question of a reform of that House.

Whether or not the referendum is introduced into English politics, it seems reasonable to suppose that as the House of Lords in either case will have in the future to hold the scales between the electorate and its representatives, the functions and constitution of that House will come more and more under public notice and discussion. Lord Rosebery has taken up a position of some violence on this subject,

but he has never expressed any clear definite views about it, or formulated the scheme which he wished to have adopted. No reasonable politicians are in favour of government by a single Chamber. Mr Lecky has stated the case against single Chambers with conclusive force, that of all possible forms of government that of a single omnipotent democratic Chamber is the very worst. In this opinion most men would agree. It is as susceptible as an individual despot to all the temptations of uncontrolled power, and its collective sense of responsibility is no greater than the very attenuated share which falls to the lot of each individual member. It may assume at any moment the character of a mob, and resort to blows. Its members are often tied by pledges, influenced by personal interest, absorbed in the triumph of a party, acting under the eye of constituents whom they know to be ignorant, and believe, perhaps erroneously, to be devoted to their own narrow and immediate interests. When such a Chamber breaks up into groups, the difficulty of obtaining a decision on the merits of any one question is enormously increased by the system of log-rolling, of each group agreeing to support the objects of the others in return for support to its own. Of all the many parliamentary constitutions now existing in the world, Mr Lecky points out that Greece, Mexico, and Servia are the only ones in which independent and sovereign nations have adopted the system of a single Chamber. Norway is another instance of at least virtual government by a single Chamber. But it is not absolutely independent, being united with Sweden, and the extreme concentration of power so resulting is one of the causes of dangerous

tension between the two countries. England was never governed by a single Chamber, except for a short time under the Commonwealth. The abolition of the House of Lords by a vote of the Commons was very soon followed by the expulsion of the Commons, and for some generations it was a maxim in English politics that the two Houses must stand or fall together—a maxim which in all probability is sound. Cromwell felt himself obliged to have two Chambers under his Protectorate. America started in 1781 with a single Chamber. It was invested, Mr Lecky says, "with very small powers, and was almost as completely overshadowed by the State rights of its constituents as the Cromwellian House of Commons had been by the military power of the Commonwealth." Though a single Chamber, it certainly was not an omnipotent Chamber. In 1787 the very first article of the American Constitution divided the Congress into a Senate and a House of Representatives. In all the separate States, and in all the British colonies, the system of two Chambers prevails. In the French Constitution of 1791 all power was placed in the hands of a single Chamber. The result was tyranny and the Reign of Terror. In 1848 the experiment was repeated with a similar result. Again France was conducted through anarchy to despotism.

In Great Britain we have a Second Chamber, the recent decline of whose authority is more apparent than real, which has throughout its enormously extended career shown that "flexibility of adaptation" to varying circumstances which is a sign of vitality. It may claim at least 1000 years of existence, as against the 630 of the Lower House. The

Wars of the Roses reduced its number, as regards the temporal members, to 29; even in Henry VIII's reign the number never exceeded 51. The Reformation removed many of the spiritual members and made the temporal members a clear majority, increasing their influence by a vast distribution of monastic property. The Revolution was due to a great extent to that House, and was largely regulated and maintained by it. Through the system of small boroughs it exercised great influence over the other House; and the most critical moment of its fortunes was when the Ministry of 1719 endeavoured to limit its number and deprive the sovereign of the power of fresh creation. George III. largely added to its numbers, and for the first time gave it a predominantly Tory character. Still it did not come into violent antagonism with the people as the Commons did in the Wilkes case and in the case of the Coalition Ministry. In the latter instance the nation ratified the Lords' rejection of Fox's India Bill as decisively as in 1895 it ratified its rejection of Mr Gladstone's Home Rule Bill. Its anti-Catholic and anti-reforming policy was in unison with that of the people during all the earlier years of the century, and the main instance in which it placed itself in strong opposition to the people was during that wave of wild enthusiasm when the existing constituencies of the country voluntarily, and even violently, abdicated their power in favour of a new and untried electorate. That, however, is more than two generations ago, and although it made the mistake of exasperating and intensifying the situation, yet so far as it delayed the settlement, and insisted on its full and mature considera-

tion, it acted rightly and in the strict fulfilment of its constitutional duty.

Since 1832 the position of the House has been, as Mr Lecky points out, fundamentally changed. It no longer claims a co-ordinate power with the House of Commons; it has been excluded from all financial legislation and control; its initiative in any legislation is viewed with jealousy; it can no longer eject a Ministry. Its real power is representative—not the representation which depends on votes, but that which depends upon conformity with the educated opinion of the country, the ultimate guide of democratic votes if national prosperity is to endure. Its actual power is revisory and prohibitive over all subjects of legislation not financial which do not powerfully affect public opinion, revisory and suspensive over those which do. The main source of its power is the authority possessed by its foremost members, the capacity and experience in public business in different localities possessed by most of them. The hereditary principle is often the subject of frothy denunciation, but half of the existing peerage has been created since 1832, and the hereditary principle acts as a check on unwise creations, and probably gives to the Upper House fewer unworthy members than an ignorant electorate gives to the Lower. The constitution of the House provides an assembly whose members are too deeply interested, through their wealth, social position, and hereditary associations, in the prosperity of the country, to risk its stability by unwise resistance to the ascertained will of the nation, and who are for the like reasons above the temptation of acquiring notoriety by rashness. Mr Gladstone described them at

one time as up in a balloon, so far as the passions and interests of ordinary men were concerned: their seclusion from those temporary passions, and the complete identification of their position with the permanent and lasting interests of the country, guarantee a prudent and independent exercise of the duties of a Second Chamber. They also guarantee the introduction of a judicial element into politics. Debates in the House of Lords on great occasions are not composed of the speeches of men addressing constituents, and bidding against one another in a vote-catching tournament. Those speeches are almost always of a higher order of merit than those in the Lower House, in point of view of the information brought to bear upon the subject, and of the sincerity of comprehensive argument which is applied to it. The speakers are evidently addressing themselves to an instructed public opinion, and most of them, with their ancestors behind them, are justifying their proceedings to the posterity before them as well as to the more enlightened opinion of their own generation. If democracy more and more connects the Lower House with a miscellaneous variety of electors, it is a great source of strength to Parliament that in its Upper House it should also be connected with the chief elements of independent influence, power, and popularity which exist throughout the nation.

Besides its suspensive power, it has great influence in shaping the particular form of compromise in each case which our legislation so often assumes, and to which it largely owes whatever permanence it enjoys. Very frequently the House of Lords represents the minority which has been over-

powered in the other House. It not merely mitigates the tyranny in which a majority is too often tempted to indulge, but the knowledge that it will do so has a restraining influence on that majority which is of great value.

Thus the political value of the House of Lords as at present existing is that it consists of members who have the will and the power and the patriotism, guaranteed by their position in the past, the present, and the future, to exercise on momentous occasions the authority which is required, to refrain from pushing that authority beyond reasonable limits, and at the same time to be content on all ordinary occasions with an admittedly secondary position in the work of government and legislation. It is only in an exceptional state of society that the materials exist for establishing a Second Chamber which so completely answers the purpose for which it is created. Its authority largely results from its *personnel*, and it is only persons who are exceptionally placed who would be contented with the habitual exercise of secondary authority, while at the same time they are equal to the exercise of the highest, and know that they command public confidence in doing so. It is composed of men who hold or have held the highest offices of State, of a large number who have for years been members of the House of Commons and accustomed from platforms to gain experience of their fellow-citizens, of men who have had a wide experience of life, and as landlords, magistrates, and political leaders of their districts have gained aptitude for business. It seems, according to Mr Lecky, that Archbishop Magee's criticism on the House was that nothing struck him more than the large

amount of curious special knowledge possessed by its members. If the most out-of-the-way subject was started, there was always, he observed, some obscure peer on the back benches who had made the subject a study and knew all about it; while in the fields of literature, philosophy, and science the Peers may at least challenge comparison with the Commons.

Mr Lecky approves as a reform the proposal that Cabinet Ministers should have the right of opposing or defending their measures in both Houses, though their right of voting should be restricted to the House to which they belong. He instances the inconvenience of the most powerful Minister being in the House of Lords while the decisive verdict on his policy lies in the Commons. But the powerful Minister is sure to have competent lieutenants, and the inconvenience of Ministers and debaters being interchangeable between the two Houses would outweigh any advantages to be gained. Besides, the two Houses are separate in their functions as well as in their members, and it would considerably detract from the weight and moral authority of the House of Lords if its principal members had forestalled the speeches which they address to their own Chamber by previous rehearsals of them in the other.

It is not at all clear that the alternative of mending or ending the House of Lords has presented itself. The overwhelming decision of the last election may be taken as evidence that the country has no wish either to overthrow it or destroy its power or extirpate its hereditary element. But Mr Lecky insists that there could be no greater error than to infer from that triumph that there is no need of change or reform in the Upper

House, widening its basis, increasing its strength and its representative character. We doubt the necessity of increasing its strength. The object in view should be to fetter the omnipotence of Parliament as other democracies do, not by increasing the strength of one Chamber to increase the friction between the two. The more the power of the Lords is increased, the greater the resulting temptation to come into unnecessary collision with the Commons, and to indulge in activity which would excite opposition and increase the friction of parliamentary life and government. Anything which increased the indirect representative character of the Upper House would be welcome; but that could not be done by legalising the creation of life-peers unconnected with the tenure of high office, either past or present. Nothing would weaken the stability of the House more than to lodge with the Ministry of the day, always the nominee of the Commons, the power of controlling its decision by too facile creations. We agree that "so long as its members discharge their duty faithfully, fearlessly, and moderately, they are not likely to want popular support." The existing constitution has secured a discharge of their duty to which those three epithets apply, and an increase of strength might lead to a disappearance of that moderation which it is essential to preserve, and which it might easily be very difficult for a new or reformed assembly to acquire. The authority of the House of Lords really lies in the personal influence and weight of many of its members. If ever the leading peers or the majority of them lose the character, influence, and prestige which they now possess, from the highest,

"the sustained splendour of whose stately lives" lends strength and dignity to the nation, to those who are merely influential magnates in their particular districts, the authority of the existing Second Chamber will decline. It has been remarked by Lord Beaconsfield that the Peers are of more account everywhere in the country than in their own House. They do not derive their authority and influence from being members of that Chamber, nor does their avenue to distinction lie within its walls. They are subject to disqualifications which in some cases must be seriously felt, and in all detract from the privileges possessed. They accordingly have no greater interest in its continued existence than the rest of the community. There can be no greater guarantee than that circumstance for the moderation with which the duties of a Second Chamber should be habitually conducted, or for the faithful and fearless discharge of it when exceptional occasions arise, or for a wise prudence in yielding when once the matured determination of the country is reasonably attested.

The real cause of Lord Rosebery's pronounced hostility to the House of Lords as at present existing is the extremely limited support which he and his party receive from it. But that is merely a temporary incident in the relation of that party to the House. Down to the time when Mr Gladstone embarked upon his downward course, of which the volumes before us are the first instalment of historic condemnation, the two parties in the State, owing to the very numerous creations by Liberal Ministers, were pretty evenly balanced. The Liberal party in the House of Lords condemned that course and withdrew its support,

as emphatically as the whole country has done in 1895, and as history is beginning to do in Mr Lecky's book. The way to recover that lost support is to reverse the policy and abandon the expedients to which Mr Gladstone, during the eclipse of his great genius, had recourse, and which most assuredly he would not have resorted to in his earlier and better days, before he threw himself with characteristic self-abandonment into all the thoughts and works and ways of a mere party leader, bent upon securing, *per fas aut nefas*, a majority of votes. If the Liberal party were to return upon its steps, abandon Home Rule, its coalition with the disaffected Irish, its patronage of the various elements of disorder at home, Lord Rosebery and his followers would stand better with the Second Chamber as well as with the electorate. The difficulty of their doing so, however, is portentous. Mr Gladstone's bequest to them is a policy and a coalition which they cannot persist in without incurring the strongest opposition from Great Britain, and which they cannot discontinue without breaking up into a congeries of mutually hostile groups which would consume time in the slow process of reconciliation. The Irish rejection of Parnell has been avenged in a similar way.

The disastrous consequences of the manœuvres of the last ten years are not limited to one of the great parties of the State; they extend to the whole nation. It is a national disaster of the first magnitude that one of the two parties should by an almost irreparable error have adopted a policy and a coalition which sever it as completely from the great masses of the English people, with their profound conservatism and

genuine attachment to the institutions of their country, as from the Second Chamber. If any disaster befell the present Administration, the only alternative Ministry which could be formed is one which is hopelessly in discord, after a prolonged examination of its methods, alike with the classes and the masses. Perhaps one of the most difficult problems of the present reign will prove to be how the Liberal party may rescue itself from its present perplexity and re-establish itself in the eyes of the country. The task is one of enormous difficulty, and will never be accomplished by leaders who are divided from each other by personal jealousies, and some of whom are too old to dig with any vigour foundations upon which others will have to build. Lord Rosebery alone has given any sign. He has admitted the futility of long programmes, which implies a distrust in log-rolling; and that Home Rule can never be carried against the will of the predominant partner. If those two admissions are carried to their logical result, and the Liberal party can be rebuilt with a constructive policy on a single subject for its intelligible foundation, and a leader vigorous enough to carry it into effect, a beginning would have been made to abolish the disastrous legacy bequeathed to it by the statesman whom it for the fourth time placed in the position of Prime Minister. The task of retracing its steps is slow and full of peril, but it is better than remaining in a *cul-de-sac*. The lesson of the last election, admitted by Sir William Harcourt himself to have been a perfect storm of disaster to his party, must be laid to

heart. It cannot be more forcibly expressed than in the words of Mr Lecky: "It showed clearly which section of the Liberal party in the great Home Rule schism most truly reflected the sentiments and conviction of the nation. It showed how enormously men had overrated the importance of the noisy groups of socialists, faddists, and revolutionists that float upon the surface of English political thought like froth-flakes on a deep and silent sea. It showed also, not less clearly, how entirely alien to English feeling was the log-rolling strategy which had of late been growing so rapidly in English politics." No one wishes to see the great Liberal party of the past permanently disabled. For a time at least it is played out. Its abler and more distinguished leaders have joined the Conservatives. That junction opens, as it were, the second chapter in the early history of the British democracy. On the conspicuous failure of those who claim to have been its founders a great homogeneous party of overwhelming strength, and under the guidance of a powerful band of statesmen, steps forward to take up the reins and prescribe the policy of the future. To consolidate instead of dismember the United Kingdom, to bind together in a close tie the colonies to their democratic mother, to uphold the empire and spread the commerce of Great Britain, to utilise existing institutions for the good government of the country, are worthy aims for the new electorate to adopt, are faithfully represented and will be powerfully promoted by the Administration which they have so decisively summoned into power.

AS THE SEASONS CHANGE.

"OLD Reeks's lugger hev just got in, an' she's moored by the side o' the quay; by the look on her an' the crew, it ain't bin by no means a payin' trip this time. All as I could git out on him was, as he'd passed a three-decker out in open water, scuddin' under bare poles, and a-showin' on'y two tiers o' guns instead o' three at times. Somethin' hev put a crab on him, this 'ere cruise; he looks as if ager mixer had run short with him."

"Werry likely. The preventive cutters hev bin out ag'in for a leetle sailin' an' firin' practice. Piper-Owlet an' Winter-Thornback cruised with him once; but his winkle-pickin' on the sands an' on the outer edge on 'em was a leetle bit risky, so they left the lugger's crew. Old Reeks has had the devil's own luck an' his own chucked in with it in his time. There ain't one o' the captins out o' all the fleet o' luggers as fishes off the Banks as kin handle a craft like Reeks. Wentersum ain't no name for it with him; it's a case o' a clean pair o' heels or wreckage."

"Piper an' Thorney talked it over, when all was quiet an' forgot-like, to 'em as they knowed could be trusted in the matter. Old Reeks give out on the quiet as he wanted a picked crew o' staunch men for a long fishin' trip on the Bank, with good wittles an' good pay—fust-rate pay. Well, he got his crew, an' there was no mistake about 'em. Not on'y that, he give 'em all half their wages for the trip, so as they could leave their wives an' famblies perwided for. Things went fust-rate all the way out. Thorney said as how he niver knowed Old Piper to grin as he did then; for he reckined

it was like goin' a reg'lar good outin' on the water, an' bein' most oncommon well paid for it. Well, ye see, they got to the Bank, an' started fishin' all hands—catchin', cleanin', splittin', an' saltin'! But they on'y had a day on it, when Reeks told 'em the codfish waun't big enough. He should up anchor, an' go where they was bigger an' better. So off they sails ag'in. But 'twas on the back-course: for a couple o' weeks they beat an' tacked about near to Holland an' the coast o' France. They soon smelt a rat, all the lot on 'em, an' they told Old Reeks so; but as it was a case o' in for a penny in for a pound, it waun't much use chouterin'. To cut it short, one dark quiet night the lugger ranged up alongside a reg'lar raker o' a bark layin' to in open water; you knows the cut on 'em. Tubs an' bales got shifted from the bark to the lugger like winkin'; the salt-fish was chucked o'er 'em, an' all made snug, an' then the wessels parted company.

"Then for a short spell there was hell to pay, and no pitch hot to pay with; they up an' told Reeks as he'd clean bamboozled 'em. But, lor' bless ye! he'd got a tongue on him like a Phillidelphy lawyer; an' he says, 'Listen to me, my lads, afore you wrecks me an' the wessel an' yerselves in the bargain. Ain't I wittled, liquored, an' paid ye well?' 'Yes,' they said, 'you hev; there ain't no mistake about that.'

"'Werry well, then, look at it in this 'ere way. This is my venture. I risks my lugger, an' arter all is said an' done, you're on'y doin' for me wat I knows damned well ivry mother's son o' ye hev

done for yerselves; and that is—
to talk plain—smuggled.'

"Well, instead o' makin' things wuss, this 'ere bit o' talk put 'em all in good humour, for they could see the pint on it as clear as mud in a wine-glass. An' they told him to crack on sail, an' they'd do their level best to help him clear the cargo. 'Twas fair sailin' till they got in the Channel, beatin' up Romney way. Then they sees a fine rev'nue cutter, one o' them as carries a talkin'-iron with her, makin' for 'em. 'Twas the devil an' the deep sea for choice, an' no other; the lugger was put about, an' out she threshed, with all sails set, for open water. 'Twas about four in the arternoon when they fust sighted one another, an' a fairish sweel of water on. Other craft was beatin' up, so Reeks shot across an' in between 'em like; for he noways fancied a taste of what the cutter carried. Jist as the dims fell, the pair on 'em was out in open water, an' a leetle too close, for one on 'em at least. A shot from the cutter missed the lugger's mast an' passed through her mainsail. 'Twas the on'y shot as she got, for the sea got wild, an' it grew dark, but 'twas enough, for it meant real mischief.

"An' 'tis a desprit job for to clear out from a rev'nue cutter; they ain't asleep, nor yet noddin'. They'd ha' had him, on'y he did the most desprit thing as iver *has* bin done round these 'ere shores. He made right for the sands—you knows 'em, the Goodwins—jist as if he meant to go right over 'em. Thorney and Owlet said as they niver heard sich a roarin', howlin' hell o' waters in all their lives afore. Then he jammed the tiller hard down and shot like a gull, jist on one side of 'em; she did jist scrape a leetle once, but it

waun't nothin'. If she'd struck mast an' gear would ha' gone the board, and they would ha' in Davy's locker afore they co ha' got a quid o' bacca out. They got clear, and got rid, but niver went no more sailin' capers with Reeks, nor yet winkle-pickin' the Goodwins."

A change of weather, as seasons come round, is very beneficial in all shapes and ways. The truth of the old proverb, "Tis an ill wind that blows nobody good," one sees proved again and again. The noble work the luggers have done in my own time in saving life and vessels has passed into the history of the far shores. I have seen them make their way out with their little hearted crews in the face of what looked like destruction. And would have been that, but for their consummate skill in handling their vessels. As a boy, I never knew of one single instance of a lugger keeping in when her escape was required. Beaten off a lee back they have been, with their crews in almost as bad a fix as those on board the vessels they were trying to save; but so fresh tack has been determined on, and at it they have gone again with a determination that or death itself could conquer. These are only homely facts, well known at one time the whole length of Sussex, Kentish, and Essex far shores. So common at one time were daring efforts to save life that they were barely noticed by those that witnessed them.

A rattling cheer would be given as they went out, and when coming in; and it ended there. Their nimble willing hands and warm hearts beating under rough garments were ready to take charge of the crews they had brought land. Joining hands to form

chain in the surf, to clutch poor storm-battered creatures, is not feather-bed work. The lasses were in it as well. As they used to say, the devil and all his imps could not keep them indoors if there was a chance of saving life. What they did for others they hoped and prayed others would do for their own folks in the dread time of need.

A dismayed vessel driving in, with long bounds, in the rough season of the year, is something that you almost wish you had not come on the beach to see; but once you are there, some eerie fascination will not let you leave it: it looks like some unfortunate creature driving on to its doom. As a rule it is soon over, there is a crash, and a blinding cloud of spray, and you see wreckage tossing up all along the shore; but if sand-bars are in her wild course, and these are struck fair, bow-on, the vessel will for a time be fairly settled in her sandy berth, where she will keep sog-sogging, until at last the sand is within a foot or so of her deck. Some of the most hideous death-traps I have ever seen have been on the leeward side of a vessel sand-silted. There is a furious set of certain broad belts of current a short distance from shore, half a mile or a mile, as the case may be, so that the vessel on the weather—or we will say on the tidal-rush—side gets silted up and over to such a degree that only the fore and aft parts of her are visible at low tide. But the obstruction that increases with each tide naturally causes the water to swirl round to the leeward side of her, not only causing a cutting between the doomed vessel and the sand, but a deep pool beneath her keel as well. No dotterel piping, gull cackling, or tern dipping, ever got me near a wreck in this position.

One false step, a cart-load of sand slips away, and you are gone. If any fowler sees the accident, the chances are ten to one if the body is ever recovered; for thousands of ferocious crabs congregate in the pool under the keel, and it does not take them long to dispose of a lucky find.

When blustering roaring March comes in—and I never remember that lively month being a gentle one when I roamed the shores from morning to night in past times—there is much to be seen in the way of bird life. Vast hosts move along the shores and over the waters, even at the present time. Forty years ago it was simply amazing to see the various species on the wing, some actually on flight for their northern haunts, others rushing up and down—a feathered gathering of the wading clans, preparatory to their final departure.

One fowling season, towards the latter end of it, the fowlers on our own immediate line of coast were terribly put about through a wreck. And so was the coyman—at the old decoy. For a bark had broken up, with a cargo of oranges, nuts, and grain; the grain formed the bulk of her lading. This was carried by the tide for miles, until at last it was drifted one heavy flood-tide over a lot of quake-ooze flats, where a boat could not get, nor a fowler in mud-pattens; and there it rested when the tide went down for good. Tons of it were scattered all over these dangerous flats. And the fowl found it out—mallards, widgeon, teal, long-tailed ducks, shovellers, and dun-birds or pochards. The fowl came into the decoy as usual: sometimes the water was covered, but no corn or tickled-up seeds could get them up the pipes; for they had, as the decoyman said, "Got enough corn in

'em tu bust 'em, an' all as they wanted was tu sleep off their blow-out."

This they had digested by flight-time, when they rose in a body and made for the quakes, but right out of the line of flight-shooters. As for the others, they made for the generous supply of provender in long lines, half a mile out, over the water. It was a most exasperating sight to the shooters to see them move along without being able to get one. Some tried from the boats, in their line of flight over the water, but with no success. With regard to the duck's neckbreaker, the coymen, he grunted and spoke in a far from refined manner, as if the ill-fated vessel had broken up as a special visitation and dispensation for his punishment. As to the fowlers, they reckoned that "if they'd ha' known as the corn would ha' got the fowl away, although the oranges an' nuts was all werry well, most special fur the young ones, they'd sooner she'd gone to pieces somewhere else."

Directly the days begin to shorten, the herons become restless. Recently I have heard them calling hoarsely, when on the wing and in the trees, not in the gloaming, but in the middle of the day; for they will flap over miles of country to find a quiet run of fishing-water.

One stream, well sheltered by banks, with alternate pools and shallows, has been very much frequented by them of late—not so much on account of the fish as for small deer, such as rats, mice, and voles, that come down the banks to drink. If the quarry is too large, it does not take the bird long to convert it into swallowing size. How matters of no small size go down that slender neck is a snake-like mystery.

Pheasants and partridges have their work set out for them to find food for their broods and to protect them. I have seen the protective instinct carried out in a wonderful manner to suit the occasion and the surroundings. One brood of fair-sized partridges, noted, were as much put out by a couple of rooks as they would have been with crows. For some reason, no doubt a good one, I have seen specimens of the form spread-eagled out recently.

We have given the rook his due at all times as one of the farmer's best friends; but now and again he has sanguinary desires steered over him, to which for want of moral firmness he gives way, and then he suffers. The wonder is that when he is hard pushed he does as little harm as he does. This last has been a most favourable nesting season for all kinds of birds; yet in my travels to and fro and across country, I have not noticed more of them about than in less favourable seasons for nesting and bringing up the brood. The orchards and fruit-gardens may have something to do with this, for folks do not shoot at birds that go there, except to frighten them. I have seen the first indications of the soft-billed migrants gathering recently. A depends as to their final flitting on how much wet we may get in August. Of insect life in the shape of butterflies and moths there has been little in or on any portion of our hunting-grounds. Just at present there is a perfect mania for clearing off and rooting up wild tangles, even by the river-side and by secluded pools on private grounds.

Rain, which was so needed, has fallen in successive thunder showers that have, as they term it, got in the hills to stay for

time. This is literally true, for if a stiff breeze does not carry the heavy clouds away, they will mass up and keep hovering over the high grounds for weeks. The woodland foliage is now at its best; it will soon begin to change, but no real tones of warm colour can be seen yet. Down by the river, aquatic growth flourishes in rank luxuriance; water-lilies in profusion boss out and up from their broad, cool green pads, backed by huge sheaves of bulrushes, tangled of meadow-sweet and purple loosestrife. Last, but not least, are the patches of the sword-blade sedge or grass, call it by either name as you please, that will, unless you use extreme caution in moving through, cut your clothes or your flesh like a knife. On the banks that are low just here burdocks and thistles can be seen in their prime; the burrs on the docks are like thickly hung purple balls, finely contrasted by the large dark-green leaves. As to the thistles that stand up as high as your breast, they are a mass of carmine blooms, each bunch the size of a breakfast-cup. Round about their roots the mole throws up his hillocks and the nightingale croaks to her brood to bid them leave their covert under the dock stems, and pick from the loose crumbling hullocks freshly turned choice morsels that were too small for the black-coated digger's notice. He has been called the blind mole, we know, but that is a fiction; when he runs about at times in the hot sunshine just put your finger down to him and feel if he is blind. No; he will fix it, and hang like a little bull-dog. A pair of young goldfinches, the first we have seen this year, are flitting about the thistles, the seeds of which are not ripe yet for the birds; this is evi-

dently only a preliminary inspection of the crop. The nightingales are not left in undisputed possession of the mowdiwarps (mole-heaps), for the larger willow-wrens come for their share. Robin will stand by the side of a moving hill that the mole is working under, with his tail up and his head cocked on one side. I very frequently turn the earth of fresh hillocks over the sward for the birds to visit after I have passed along.

Refreshing showers cause creatures to be on the alert, putting fresh life into them. Only a few days back the voles were swimming in these lily-pads; but not one will venture there now, for pike have left their deep hovers below to feed just outside the fringe of them. Judging from the vicious shoots they make, small fry are having a lively time of it. Fish will feed now the sun has nearly gone down under the hills, —good fish. When most people leave off is often the best time to fish,—for good fish feed, and feed well, in the twilight, when all is still.

Let us lean over the coping of this old grey bridge to think a while. A wide bend of the river with trees on either side is directly in front of us, and an old mill, much greyer than the bridge we are on, looms out through the trees in the distance. Beyond this the heather-covered hills are massed, a soft sky floating over them,—saffron on the horizon, deep warm grey above,—the tones softly blending, without one single cloud-fleck to disturb the harmony of tones.

It is late in the evening, nearly nine o'clock, but the soft bright after-glow brings all out so distinctly that we can see the rings that the bleak make rising at the

midges half-way down the bend of the river. On one side of us some old rails keep the stock from getting into a shallow swamp close to the main highroad, so near to it that if you got over the rails from the road you were in the swamp at once. I have been casting my eyes over it from time to time, just to gauge mentally the probable depth of squash that some fine meadow-sweet was springing from—in fact have almost made up my mind to take a bunch of it home, if I got mired over it. But just when about to move for this floral venture, is heard just below, and not six feet from where I was standing, Querk, querk, querk, querk, querk, querk! like a duck with a wire cravat round its neck. These sounds were followed by soft coodling peep, peep, peeps! The next moment, without the least noise, I was stretched out flat on the coping, the extreme end of it, with my head hanging over, looking directly down on a water-rail hovering her peepers on the nest close to. But her quick eye saw something on the end of that coping-stone that she had not seen before. Flop, flop, spit, spitter, spit! and as the water flicked up a little there was the nest visible, but she and her peeps were gone.

Fairly well acquainted as I am with the rail's strange notes, heard from him from time to time in equally strange places, I certainly was not prepared for the performance from the one just startled. As I had not moved in the least from my first position, there was a chance that she would bring them back to the nest again; for she kept on with her querk, querk, querk! and her chicks peeped in answer to her. Then I saw the oat-grass tassels nod and sway ever so gently; she was certainly bring-

ing them back to the nest again. But when within a yard of it she climbed up a spray of meadow-sweet, quite as quickly as any cat ever climbed up a fence when a fox-terrier had shortened her tail a little, and she saw once more the strange termination of that coping-stone. Then she shot down with a flop into the water below, giving out short grunts, squeaks, and croaks of the most extraordinary nature. You might call them with perfect truth a jumble of strange sounds—as if some one was coughing with difficulty and in pain, or a frog snoring away in the joy of his heart when April showers were gently falling, mixed with the squeaks from a rat in a trap. All the time this single-handed concert was going on, you could hear, chiming in now and again, the peep, peep, peeps! from her scattered brood. As I am nearly six feet in height, and almost sixteen stone in weight, the end of a coping-stone to rest on is not exactly a bed of roses; and if I sprawled on it until midnight she would not come back again, so I left it: but early next morning, as soon as it was fairly light, I was there again, thinking I might by chance see her and the chicks once more. But no such luck: there was the nest, but the birds were gone. When alarmed, rails will, like others of the wader and swimmer family, take their young from a place and quickly make another home for them elsewhere. The shifts and expedients of wild creatures, when you have the rare good fortune to see them, are simply wonderful when used merely for their own preservation; but when all their wits are brought into play for the sake of their young, so that these may not come to harm, some of the most innocent of creatures will baffle you completely.

Shoving a punt into a patch of lush swamp growth would be an act of folly, for directly her bows swished in, every creature that sheltered there would leave it in double-quick time, silently too.

Coots, moorhens, rails, and wild ducks will, if not molested, feed with the poultry on any lonely farm that has a piece of water near it which they frequent; in fact, the nearer they can get to houses and people the better they like it. Cock and snipe are certainly peculiar in this respect; for on one of the best teal-springing moors that I have known, the greater portion of them were tealed close to the main highroad. One farm, from which the drain ran into the waste, was never without these long-billed beauties after the first frosts had shown on the grass. They fed and bored up it, right from the moor waste where they located themselves, close up to the backdoor of the farm. Personally I do not fancy either cock or snipe after having seen them probing in that odoriferous drain—which may only be prejudice, but the distaste is not to be overcome.

One evening lately I was out for a stroll on a path leading by a pond. At the extreme end of it, where a gate only parted the pond-path from the highroad, something shot out from the edge of that path, fringed with sword-grass, which at first seemed to be only a startled vole. But the heave-up of the water, as the creature pursued its course just beneath it, at once told it was not that; and the trace came in again under water from a clump of grass at my feet, whence it had first started. After lightly and carefully parting the grass-blades, only a bit of half-submerged sodden turf was visible; and just by the side of it there was another boil up of the water,

which was only six inches in depth close to the path. Then a dab-chick poked her head up a yard or so away from that sodden patch. It was her nesting-raft, which was under my very nose. To look at it, any one not well acquainted with the bird's ways would have hooted at the idea of bird's eggs being in that wet rotting dab of weeds. There was not the slightest depression; it was just a flat dab of rotting green weeds and nothing more. Very, very gingerly a good two inches of that vilely smelling top-dressing was removed, and there lay four eggs. The nest was thoroughly examined, half lifted out of the water and replaced, the top-dressing being raked off, leaving the eggs bare. After the grass-blades had been carefully arranged over it, as they were before, the nesting-site was left for about half an hour; when revisited the eggs were covered as before by the birds. Now on the face of it no one, if he gave a moment's thought to the subject, would think that the bird could dive for that quantity of top-dressing and place it over her eggs in so short a time,—it would be absurd to think of it. The fact is, the weeds are in readiness close to the nest, pulled up from the bottom by the birds beforehand for that purpose.

It has been stated by some authorities (*sic*) that the dabchick can sit up, resting on the tarsus; and, by the way, they are generally set up like that, as if they were going through recruit drill, bolt upright: but this, in point of fact, is a most unnatural position. The great northern diver, the black-throated and the red-throated divers, do sit up, or rather rest in an erect position at times, under the stress of circumstance, but not very frequently. What a creature

can do when forced to do it is often quite contrary to its usual course of action. Due allowance must be made at all times; nature has no hard-and-fast rules in her economy.

Our favourite water-sprite can move with rapidity, stretching his neck out a little and canting his body forwards slightly, when he thinks that there is need for it; and there certainly is that at times. If they could not run over submerged tangle, just rising to the surface, their case would be hard indeed, for the network of roots and rootlets of aquatic growth in the shallows would catch them like a net, and they would drown in it. Where carp are not able to root and wriggle through, no diving bird can go, not even that eel-like mover the water-rail. Once I got wet through in trying to convince a certain individual that even carp could not get through submerged tangle. The dispute became warm, and in I plunged up to the neck, kicked about, and stirred the water up. The fish in their fright rushed into the tangle, and there they remained held fast. I groped out, with my head under water, a couple of brace of good ones before coming out. And then my friend calmly remarked that he would take the fish. After disjuncting the vertebrae of those bemuddled carp, and threading a willow slip through their gills, I smiled at him in the way that a dog-otter does when fixed in a trap, and left him to think the matter over whilst I bestowed the carp in a more grateful quarter.

As the seasons change, the ways and means of various creatures change with them. Fish are affected by the weather to a most exasperating degree, from the angler's point of view: a long spell of fine weather upsets the cart

completely. In the night-time large fish work their way from their hovers over the shallows, into deep holes shaded over by trees, leaving their real homes for a time to prospect about a bit. There they are at present, in various deep pools, swimming lazily to and fro. A regular cruel sight to look at; for they are all good fish, ranging from 1 lb. in weight up to 4 lb. Chafers, humble-bees, cherries, grasshoppers, worms, and the brightest of bright minnows, are mixed all to no purpose.

The fish are simply glutted with bough-feed—the various creatures that drop from the trees into the water—and young birds at times; and they refuse contemptuously all the luxuries that are offered them on the point of a hook. When a rush of fresh water comes down from above, well stained from the drainings of ploughed lands, these very same fish will then take almost anything that is offered them.

"Look at the pewits, right away over the flats, Craft—there's a cloud of them roving about like a lot of leaves in a gale of wind; and just hark what a row they are kicking up. And look, there goes a good stand of golden plovers, right clean away from the foreshores."

"I've sin 'em, my son, an' heard 'em fur sum time; an' there's sumthin' else as I'll pint out tu ye. Jist look this way, out over the water, at that 'ere lot o' flappin' an' cracklin' gulls a-comin' in. Old Gorger Bolt was a-cracklin' on mid'lin' heavy this marnin' at his boy, just cause he reckined as they might as well go out as stop ashore, arter he'd bin up half the night gitting the gear ready."

"Gorger is as wicious as a shark when he's crabbed a bit. He told Biler his boy as he'd ram a wet swab in his gills an' break the mop 'andle over his figgerhead, if so be

as he wus mutinous enough tu say another word on that 'ere pint o' weather-gauge.

"The flight-shooters told him when they passed his cabin this mornin' thet not one on 'em had got a feather, let alone a bird. Gorger said the beach smelt o' brimstone where they'd bin a-standin' talkin' tu him; 'twas mid-dlin' perlite talk, fur he ain't no-ways pertickler at times. An' I knows as their words will be proved afore two hours' watch is over. They all on 'em sweers like hoss-troopers, but there ain't one on 'em could tell a damned lie not if they put their shoulder out o' jint a-trying at it.

"The fowl wus fidgety they said, a-shootin' to an' fro all over the marshes; an' they showed like a lot o' falling shootin'-stars, hol-lerin' out most surprisin'. The tide wus right out; but the fust o' the flow wus a-ripplin' the sands, an' all sorts o' fowl wus there, hundreds of 'em, not a-feedin', but a-dabblin' an' a-washin' in the tide-plashes. An' all the lot on 'em showed double on the sands, as if they wus a-standin' on lookin'-glasses. That 'ere ain't a healthy sight, not by no manner o' means; fur ye see, my son, that if the sands is all a-brimmin' atop with water on the werry fust ripple o' the flow, there's a desprit lot o' rough water back somewhere a-forcin' it.

An' they told him when the sun riz out o' the water as the sands wus lit up all light-like as if they wus civered in snow. Then the light went away agin as quick as it had cum out. Gorger is a rum old fish; he ain't werry hansum, an' he ain't werry smooth in his ways at times, but he ain't no fool—he niver have bin. I've heard him say lots o' times if so be as folks would on'y notice the ways and woices o' fowl a leetle more 'an what sum on 'em do, there wouldn't be quite so much small wreckage about."

Gorger looked seawards and got his boat as far up the shingle as he could get her with the windlass, for he knew what wus coming.

And it did come with a rush—without any preliminary warnings: right in from open water great rollers broke and raced, roaring and hissing over the sands in a way that fisher-folks very seldom witnessed, fully crested; the white horses had got the bits in their mouths this time; they leapt over the massive piles and rushed up the beach. I wus flat down on the extreme edge of the beach, where it joins the sand-hills, with my head resting on my folded arms, looking at that howling, screaming, hissing, boiling waste of waters: there wus no standing upright against the storm.

A SON OF THE MARSHES.

"FROM TOP TO BOTTOM."¹

WE have only reached the month of May; the really heavy work of the session is still before us; and the Opposition are already boasting of the mischief they have done. From the very beginning some of the subalterns and many of the rank and file made no secret of their intentions; and the great Sir William himself, though, with the coyness natural to his character, he affected great reluctance at first, ultimately yielded to the tempter, and, whispering he would ne'er consent, consented. We had hoped it might be otherwise. In our article of last March on "The Opening Session" we ventured to anticipate that with the return of an ~~old-fashioned~~ majority expressive of general confidence in her Majesty's Ministers, irrespective of particular questions, the Radical-Liberal party would also revert to the old-fashioned ways of Opposition—to the system which prevailed generally during what Mr Gladstone has called the palmy days of parliamentary government.

Of late years we have been accustomed to see Opposition conducted in quite a different spirit, and the extent to which parliamentary government has suffered in public estimation from the necessary results of such a system is one of the commonplaces of contemporary politics. When Parliament opened we forbore from predicting that the present Opposition would continue their vexatious tactics. We took advantage of some expressions let fall by Sir William Harcourt to encourage our readers in believing that he at least was alive to the changed

position of political parties. He must surely see, we thought, the enormous difference between the opposition of the Conservatives to his own Government and the opposition of his own party to Lord Salisbury's Government. The introduction of a Home Rule Bill and a Welsh Disestablishment Bill in a House of Commons where there was a British majority of twenty dead against both,—with the primary and essential condition on which the Prime Minister himself declared Home Rule to be dependent still unfulfilled, and the predominant partner still unconvinced,—was the ~~act~~ of a Government not certain of its own existence for twenty-four hours, and utterly careless of consequences so that it tided over the passing moment.

Such measures stand upon a totally different footing from bills of which the principle is ratified by a majority of a hundred and fifty in the House of Commons, and an enormous majority of the British people outside of it—bills of which the objects have been carefully considered by the public, and accepted as necessary by three-fourths of the nation. The Parish Councils Bill and the Factory and Workshops Bill met with no such opposition, because, however open to criticism, they were legitimate legislation introduced in conformity with parliamentary usage, and known in one form or another to be acceptable to Great Britain. Unhappily, however, that faint glimmering of a better frame of mind which was visible in Sir William Harcourt's language at the beginning of the session has long since faded away

¹ Mr Asquith, April 21.

before the blandishments of faction. The enchantress has locked him in her arms, and he must do the bidding of the false goddess or be hurled into outer darkness.

The worst of it is, that it is not only on domestic questions that her influence will be felt. Education Bills, Agricultural Bills, Labour Bills, if they do not succeed in one session, may succeed in another. But with foreign or colonial questions the case is very different indeed. Irreparable harm may be done in a few months, or even weeks, by a violent and reckless Opposition bent on disparaging the Government at any cost, on lowering its credit abroad, and misrepresenting in the eyes of foreigners the position which it occupies at home. We propose, therefore, before proceeding to consider the attitude of the Opposition in general, and the indications they have already given of what is to be expected from them during the next three months, to examine the tone they have adopted on the Egyptian expedition in particular, and the style in which they have thought proper to prejudice the action of Lord Salisbury, imparting to their own fictitious assumptions all the weight and reality of recognised facts.

We are confronted on the threshold by three main considerations: first of all, To what do our own pledges commit us? secondly, Is the Soudan in its present hands a standing menace to Egypt or not? thirdly, What *locus standi* has France in the Egyptian question at the stage which it has now reached? We can only discuss these points at present, as they form the subject of controversy between the Government and the Opposition. But though our field of inquiry may be limited, it is abundantly rich in materials. There have been two regular debates on

this subject in the House of Commons, and Lord Rosebery and Mr Asquith, Mr Curzon and Mr Courtney, have spoken to large audiences outside. The following remarks will be founded on the arguments and statements therein contained, as well as on the official reports and the books and essays on the same subject which have recently appeared.

In answer to the first question, then, To what do we stand committed by our own pledges? we have to point to the general admission on all sides that we are only committed to the evacuation of Egypt after our work there has been completed. It is allowed by Lord Rosebery, Sir W. Harcourt, Mr Asquith, and most of the recognised Opposition leaders, that we cannot go out to-morrow. Very well, then; can they name a date when, in their own opinion, we *shall* be able to go out, when our work will be completed and Egypt may be left to herself? Of course they can do nothing of the kind: and if they cannot, if they are unable to fix the time when our occupation may legitimately terminate, what right have they to say that the Government are doing all they can to make it as remote as possible? Mr Labouchere declares that by a "temporary" occupation of Egypt nobody could have understood a period of fourteen years. Why not? What might be meant by it would entirely depend on the purpose for which it was undertaken, and on the length of time which would be required for the execution of that purpose. Even Sir William Harcourt is not ashamed of repeating the clap-trap which less responsible politicians have set afloat as to the ulterior objects at which the Government are aiming. The danger apprehended from the Dervishes is only an excuse for an

invasion of the Soudan, which, again, is to be only a stepping-stone towards the creation of a great African empire reaching from Alexandria to the Cape. It was Mr Labouchere who more than insinuated that this was the purpose of Mr Chamberlain. But Sir W. Harcourt seemed nothing loath to back him up. Did ever any mortal man listen to such rubbish? who believes that anybody has ever uttered it? and if Sir William Harcourt doesn't believe it, he has no business to repeat it. But it is all of a piece. What does a lie more or less matter? Down with Salisbury, and d—n the expense!

However, we now start from the two admissions, that we cannot leave Egypt till our work is accomplished, and that it is not accomplished yet. Now, then, what is that work? and what are the conditions by which all our assurances with regard to evacuating Egypt have been invariably accompanied?

"They have always been accompanied," said Mr Curzon on the 20th of March, "and affected by conditions clearly expressed, incapable of misapprehension, and couched in a formula which has never varied. That formula has always been this,—that no English Government could or would evacuate Egypt until three conditions had been fulfilled—until we had secured Egypt against the danger of external attack; secondly, against the danger of internal anarchy and disorder; and, thirdly, against the recurrence of native maladministration."

In what sense, then, are we to say that this work has not yet been completed? A glance at the last report of Lord Cromer, laid before Parliament in March, and at the two reports of Mr Villiers Stuart, furnished to Lord Cromer last year, will show us that immense progress has been made in the

various reforms and improvement necessary to set Egypt on her leg again. As these are not denied it is unnecessary to recapitulate them here. But one or two examples may be given. Mr Villiers Stuart was in Egypt in 1882 and 1883, and in his report he contrasts the state of things which existed then with the condition of the people now. This is what he saw with his own eyes in 1883 at a post-office in Upper Egypt:—

"As I passed, a gang of men in chains, probably for non-payment of taxes, were drawn up in front of the office. One of these presented a docket to the postmaster. He said, roughly, 'You have had your letter.' At the same time he tore up the docket and threw it out of the window. I took up the torn pieces, and found that they were a warrant for the delivery of a registered letter. I asked the postmaster how it came that if the man had received his letter he had been allowed to retain the voucher?

"The postmaster, seeing that I was not disposed to let the matter drop, now changed his tone, and said to the claimant, 'If you will get two respectable townspeople to certify your identity, you shall have your letter.' It appeared, therefore, that his first assertion that the man had received his letter was a positive falsehood."

The villagers complained that they were often given no receipts for their taxes, and had to pay them twice over. Sometimes even the production of a receipt was not sufficient:—

"A native was brought to me with his feet all bleeding. He stated that he had brought his land-tax to the Moudirieh, and had paid it into the hands of the *sarraf* (cashier), who gave him a receipt for it. Subsequently the land tax was again demanded. He produced his receipt, stating that he had just paid it. The *sarraf* exclaimed that he did not know how he came by that receipt, but that the money had not been paid. The

man persisting in his assertion, was bastinadoed until, under torture, the admission was extorted from him that he had not paid it.

"My informant wrote to the *mudir*, who tried to hush the matter up, saying that the accused *sarraf* was hand-in-glove with all the chief people in the province, and that it would never do to prosecute him; he, however, followed the matter up, and succeeded in proving the *sarraf's* guilt, and obtaining his dismissal. This dishonest official had, however, influence enough subsequently to obtain another appointment."

These and a thousand other instances of oppression and corruption may be found in these pages. They all existed under the Dual Control, and have all disappeared now.

"In all the provinces I visited," says Mr Villiers Stuart, "the villagers were unanimous in expressing their gratitude to us for having emancipated them from the oppression and misgovernment of former days, for having put an end to the plundering of the inhabitants by dishonest and unscrupulous tax-gatherers, for having brought justice within reach of the poor, and having put an end to the system of bribery and corruption in the native courts which had previously prevailed."

Sir John Scott wrote to Lord Cromer last year:—

"I have found very good progress in justice. The limited powers given to the *omdehs* (twenty-four hours' prison and 15 piastres fine) have been used with discretion. I have had many talks with *omdehs*, and they are certainly changed for the better. A lot were gathered together at Minieh, and I told them Fakhry Pasha and I had asked them five years ago why crime went undiscovered, and they replied, because they were afraid of vengeance if they sent people to be tried. 'Was it so now?' 'No,' they all said, 'Government, police, tribunals, all supported them, and they tried to catch everybody now.' As a matter of fact,

brigandage has disappeared, and there are no professional thieves."

But though much has been done, much still remains to be done; and even if it did not, the necessity for our continuance in Egypt depends on something more than the completion of a programme. When we have exhausted the list of improvements of which the country is capable, our mission will be only half fulfilled. The Pashas and the whole tribe of fatteners on a corrupt system are still on the spot, only watching for a favourable opportunity to inaugurate a counter-revolution and repossess themselves of their lost flesh-pots. The people have not yet learned to rely on any protection against their former oppressors except what is afforded by the English. Take away this support, and the whole machine of progress would run down-hill again, and the great work of the last ten years be completely undone. The old corrupt system would at once reassert itself, and the second state of Egypt would be worse than the first. The appetite of the bloodsuckers would be only whetted by their enforced abstinence; and the hapless fellah, instead of feeling, as they feel to-day, deeply grateful for the intervention of England, would only curse the hour when they first listened to her counsels.

These are the views expressed by Mr Villiers Stuart, whose tours through the whole region of Upper and Lower Egypt in 1883 and in 1895 have made him perfectly well acquainted with the difference between the two periods, with the wonderful progress that had been made during the last twelve years, and with the circumstances which justify us in believing that the withdrawal of England at the present moment

to create a habit. We have to wait till what is new has lost the gloss of novelty, and has acquired the force of custom and the sanction of prescription; till it has become part of the national life—a second nature. Then our work will be complete, and we may depart in peace and honour. And what stands between Egypt and such a consummation as this? What have we to set against the delivery of a whole nation from tyranny, corruption, and misgovernment of the worst kind? to what are we asked to sacrifice the fairest prospect which Egypt has had for many centuries of taking a place among civilised nations, and turning to the best account her great natural advantages? The jealousy, or rather we should say the irritable vanity, of a single European Power!

It is nonsense, as we have already pointed out, to talk about broken pledges before the time has arrived for fulfilling them. That time cannot arrive till we have secured the three objects for which our occupation was undertaken. We have already enumerated them in the words of Mr Curzon. We have not yet finally secured Egypt against the recurrence of native maladministration. Have we secured her, then, against the danger of external attack? a question which brings us to the second branch of our inquiry, Is the Soudan a standing menace to Egypt, or is it not?

If not a menace to Egypt, it is, at all events, a reproach to civilisation. Mr Labouchere, in common with many other assailants of the Government, seems to be perfectly ignorant of the present condition of the Soudan. They speak of the Dervishes as a brave people struggling for their freedom. We know that they are brave, and

against the Italians they may be struggling for their freedom; but the struggle for their own freedom is a struggle for the slavery of others—for the maintenance in its worst form of a traffic which humanity abhors; and for the perpetuation of a barbaric despotism, inflicting on the wretched people who writhe under it an amount of suffering and shame surpassing the worst that has been reported from either Armenia or Bulgaria. If the Pashas chastised them with whips, the Dervishes have chastised them with scorpions. In proof of this assertion, we have only to turn to the recently published work of Slatin Pasha, admirably summarised by Captain Lugard, to the less bulky volume of Sir Alfred Milner, and to Major Wingate's 'Mahdism and Egypt.' It is this amiable race of conquerors, who flog women to death, and lock up their enemies in dungeons, compared with which the Black Hole at Calcutta was an airy and commodious residence, whom Mr Labouchere takes under his special patronage as worthy of being ranked with Leonidas or Kosciusko.

"It is not a pleasant reflection," says Sir Alfred Milner, "that the former dominions of Egypt in the Soudan are perhaps the only portion of the world where civilisation has during the last fifteen years distinctly retrograded, the one region deliberately given back to barbarism. And it is painful to think that this dark page in Egyptian history belongs to that chapter of it which records her fortunes while under the influence of Great Britain."

It is his firm opinion that merely in the interests of civilisation the Soudan will sooner or later have to be retaken. But with reference to its influence on Egypt in particular, it is plain, if we accept his authority, that England's work will

not be completed in the valley of the Nile till this source of constant disquietude is removed :—

"There can be no permanent rest for Egypt as long as a reign of explosive barbarism prevails from Suakim to Darfur, and from Wady Halfa to Wadelai. The offensive power of that barbarism may wax or wane—it is certainly on the wane at present—but it is always a potential source of incalculable mischief."

Lord Cromer, referring to the Dervish forces in the immediate vicinity of the Egyptian frontier, says he fears that "raids similar in character to those which occurred last year must from time to time be expected." The apprehension of such raids, on whatever scale they may be conducted, is totally inconsistent with the growth of that feeling of confidence which Lord Farrer acknowledges to be necessary to the permanent regeneration of Egypt. Sir Charles Dilke tried to make light of this passage in Lord Cromer's report, representing the raids referred to as merely what were always to be looked for in the vicinity of barbarous tribes, and comparing them to the incursions to which our frontier provinces in India are occasionally exposed. Lord Wantage, just returned from Egypt, does not read Lord Cromer's words in that sense. The raids might be nothing from a military or political point of view; but as they meant the massacre of peasants, the plunder of villages, and the abduction of women and children, they can hardly be considered insignificant from a social point of view, or as matters to be regarded with indifference by a Power whose avowed mission it is to put an end to internal anarchy. The desert is no protection against this kind of border warfare.

"However excellent this frontier may be," said Mr Chamberlain, "if anything like the conquest of Egypt were attempted by the Dervishes, it is no protection against an invasion in the case of their slipping in behind the frontier at Wady Halfa, and desolating the villages and lands which are on the inner side of that frontier. I say, therefore, that no possibility of fulfilling our duty to the people who are actually on our frontier exists so long as the Dervish power continually threatens it by raids."

How, then, is this system to be stopped? How is one of the first conditions on which the successful issue of our work in Egypt depends to be accomplished? This question must be answered in connection with another, How are we to ensure Egypt against an invasion by the Dervishes on a larger scale, and with far other objects in view than the loot of a village or a province? That the Khalifa is believed to cherish designs of this nature, and that just now the Soudan is in a state of dangerous ferment, which may end in strengthening his position, are facts of which no one seems to be ignorant who has any personal knowledge of the subject. The Italian reverses in Abyssinia have only precipitated a crisis which was certain to come sooner or later. The Egyptians are anxious to recover the Soudan. The Dervishes are anxious to become masters of Egypt. The latter are now flushed with victory. The Khalifa's star seems propitious. Many will rally to his standard now who three months ago would have hesitated. He may probably think that he will never have a better opportunity. Fanaticism never looks very far ahead. The Dervishes think only of getting to Cairo. The certainty that they would be driven out afterwards by European troops may not be comprehended by

them, or not allowed to count in their calculations. The danger of a great outbreak on the southern frontier of Egypt may be more or less, but it cannot be denied to exist. And to be forearmed may save a terrible expenditure of blood and treasure in the long-run.

The military authorities are agreed that Egypt requires at all events a new frontier; and the British expedition will, we suppose, proceed at least as far as Dongola, and restore that portion of the Soudan to its former owners. For it must always be remembered that in giving up the Soudan to the Mahdi in 1884, England was giving up what did not belong to her. And there can be no doubt that she owes it to Egypt to regain it for her some time or another, quite irrespective of the actual abuses and prospective dangers of the Dervish occupation. But that by the bye. What we have now to provide for is the immediate security of Egypt: to take such steps as shall relieve her from all anxiety concerning either a Dervish invasion or the harassing inroads of freebooters, which keep the peasantry of Upper Egypt in a constant state of alarm, and effectually retard the material progress of the country. When this is done, another great stride will have been made towards that complete regeneration of the Nile valley which will enable Great Britain to evacuate it.

But will it be sufficient to stop at Dongola? This must depend on many considerations, of which those on the spot must be the best judges. The Government state with perfect frankness that where we go there we shall remain; and they may not have made up their minds that the time has arrived for remaining at Khartoum. It

soon will, however, if we once reach Dongola. And good judges are of opinion that the boldest course would be the best and safest in the long-run. The pear may, or may not, be ripe. But whether we put out our hands to pluck it at once, or wait a little while longer to see if it will fall from the bough, there can be no doubt that the immediate occupation of the strip of country lying between Wady Halfa and the elbow of the Nile at Debba is of immense importance, as it will effectually bar out the Dervishes from "slipping in behind the frontier at Wady Halfa" for the purpose of ravaging the country.

Military problems, financial difficulties, sanitary considerations, will no doubt all have a voice in determining our future movements. But we doubt if any one of them, or all put together, would dictate our stopping short of Khartoum, if we are to enter the Soudan at all. If the enemy is strong enough to make our advance to Khartoum a work of difficulty and danger, he will be strong enough to give us plenty of trouble at Dongola. If he is too weak to annoy us at Dongola, he will be too weak to offer much resistance to our occupation of Khartoum. By electing to remain at Dongola we may perhaps have to fight twice over—once then, and once again when the time arrives, as it assuredly will, for moving farther southward. Why not let one battle do for both, and finish the job out of hand? We have a shrewd suspicion that there is only one answer to this question, and that is, that we are unwilling to inflict too severe a wound on French susceptibilities. And this brings us naturally to the third branch of our subject—viz., What *locus standi* has France in the Egyptian question at the

He reminds one of Mrs Leo Hunter's friend, Count Smorltork.

It may be that both Mr Morley and Mr Courtney have had interviews with Lord Farrer since he returned from Egypt, and have heard from his own lips what he stated in his letter to the 'Times' with regard to the insecurity of the Upper Nile. But the reason why Lord Farrer was permitted to go without an escort was that a Dervish raid had just been repelled, the marauders had been driven back and punished, and fresh signs of disturbance had not yet manifested themselves. A few weeks later the Dervishes again began to show themselves in the neighbourhood of Wady Halfa, and precautions had to be renewed. Lord Farrer went up between the showers, and now refuses to believe that there was any rain. All these attempts to minimise the danger with which England is called upon to deal play into the hands of France. But that is nothing when party interests are at stake.

But there are others who, with more knowledge of the subject, and a disposition to treat it quite fairly and honestly without any party end to gain, still think that France has special claims to consideration on the Egyptian question, and may be excused at all events for being a little out of humour at the turn events have taken. So perhaps she may be, though the result is entirely her own fault. But whatever these claims may be, our contention is that they have now lapsed, and that judgment has gone against her by default. We are told, not perhaps quite accurately, that France made the Suez Canal; that she helped Mehemet Ali to emancipate Egypt from Turkey; that she has leavened Egyptian society with French manners and

ideas; that French *savants* have been foremost in the exploration of Egyptian antiquities; and that French is the official language of the Egyptian Government. All this may be true, but the question which immediately follows is the test one. With all these advantages in her favour, why did she fail to make the most of them? If she was "the first in Egypt," why did she not stay there? At the time of the Dual Control she had the same opportunity as England, and had better cards. After the Sultan had declared Arabi to be a rebel, there was no obstacle to France joining with England in the restoration of order. England appealed to France; but France was unwilling to take action with the promptitude which the emergency required. She hung back and exchanged diplomatic notes while society in Egypt was on the verge of dissolution, and the lives and properties not only of all Europeans, but of all Christians, were openly threatened. There was no time for diplomacy. England was compelled, much against her own will, to interfere without delay to save Egypt from anarchy and Europe from dishonour. As nobody else was willing to strike, she was obliged to take the responsibility on herself. Then when order was restored the Egyptians themselves, and many Greeks, Germans, Austrians, Italians, and even Frenchmen, petitioned England to make her occupation permanent. But the only response was the well-known despatch of Lord Granville, dated January 3, 1883, and addressed to the Great Powers, stating that England would remain in occupation till "an order of things" should be established possessing "the elements of stability and progress." Exactly what England says now; and if no such

order of things has yet been established, what has France to complain of? We have already shown that the tranquillisation of the Soudan is a necessary step towards the establishment of such an order: and what seems often to be forgotten is that when France abandoned to England the task of reconstructing Egypt, and when Lord Granville wrote the despatch to which France so constantly appeals, the Soudan was still a part of Egypt. When the English Minister spoke of our remaining in the country till order was restored, of course he meant the whole country, including the Soudan,—and must necessarily have been understood to mean it by all the European Powers. There is, therefore, no departure from the original agreement in our going to the Soudan now.

As France refused to help us at our need in 1882, when she might have placed herself in Egypt on an equal footing alongside of ourselves, she has put herself out of court. But this is not all. When we refer to the services rendered by France to Egypt, we must not forget that there is a heavy account on the other side of the ledger. Before the days of the Dual Control the French had made themselves extremely unpopular in Egypt. And Arabi's cry of "Egypt for the Egyptians," which alone made the rebellion formidable, was aimed almost exclusively at the French. Before the establishment of the mixed tribunals in 1876, "French adventurers exploited Egypt in the most merciless fashion, and frequently enjoyed the support of French diplomacy" (Milner). The great object was to get up some grievance against the Government, and demand compensation. "Please shut the window," said

Ismail Pasha to an attendant, while in conversation with a European *concessionnaire*, "for if this gentleman catches cold, it will cost me ten thousand pounds." In this little game France took a leading part. No wonder that she resisted tooth and nail the establishment of the mixed tribunals which put a stop to it; or that Egyptian statesmen who remember Egypt twenty years ago are animated by "cordial detestation of French diplomacy," and bitter resentment of the style in which she took advantage of her position. She was first in Egypt then. She had her chance. We did not interfere. Gentlemen of the French Guard fire first. When the Dual Control was established in 1879 she might still have kept the lead. But when she refused in 1882 to adopt the only measures which could make it really effective, and retired from the field in dudgeon, she threw the game into English hands, which were certainly very much better than French ones for carrying out the necessary work, and she cannot go back now.

But if she could not bear the sight of the English in Egypt occupying the position which had once been her own, another chance was afforded her of changing the situation. It is needless here to give the history of the Wolff Convention of 1887. It is sufficient to say that England offered to evacuate Egypt upon certain conditions, one being that if anarchy was the consequence she should have the right of re-entry. As such a result was by no means improbable, it was necessary to provide against it in some way; and as England had been doing the work of Europe in the Nile valley for five years, it was not very likely that she would consent

to any other Power stepping in, should a second occupation become necessary, and taking it out of her hands. But here again French jealousy prevailed. Turkey herself had agreed to those terms. But France pulled her tail, and caused her at the last moment to refuse to ratify the Convention. Nothing would satisfy her but unconditional evacuation, the almost certain result being the restoration of the old *régime* with all its misgovernment and corruption. England had no alternative but to stay where she was.

Ever since the British occupation began France has thrown every obstacle she could in the way of Egyptian progress. She has opposed it at every step, and has done her utmost to perpetuate all the old abuses which the English administration has been gradually sweeping away. If it is a common-sense doctrine that people must be supposed to intend the obvious consequences of their own actions, how can we resist the inference that France does not wish for the regeneration of Egypt, and is determined at all events that it shall not be accomplished, if she can prevent it, under British auspices? It may be that France has a great material interest at stake in the good government of Egypt. But material interests have powerful rivals in vanity and ambition with most nations of the world. How much more so, then, with France, whose ruling passion is glory? Briefly, if England evacuates Egypt, and Egypt relapses into anarchy, England will be deeply discredited, and France will have another chance. There will be another scramble, in which she may find her account. If the English Protectorate has failed, Europe might reasonably say, Let us try the experiment of a French

one. England certainly could raise no objection to it.

That either the experiment would be a total failure, or that Protection would soon merge in annexation, may be confidently asserted. The French could never do for Egypt what England has done. They may conquer the country and turn it into a French province: they could never make it fit for independence, even if they honestly tried. The French have not the genius required for this kind of work. The practical instinct, the habit of compromise, the power of grasping an existing situation and making the best of it without being vexed by theoretical imperfections, are qualities peculiar to the English race and wholly alien to the French. The political history of the two countries is a sufficient proof of this. We need hardly ask ourselves how the British constitution has grown up, and how often the pursuit of theory has been fatal to good government in France, to be sensible of the justice of this distinction. But we have many illustrations besides these. France is making the same mistake in Siam which she made in Egypt, and will make herself equally unpopular, though of course she may prevail by force, as she might have done elsewhere. It is a curious coincidence, too, that just as France preceded us in Canada and had to retreat before us; as she preceded us in India and had to retreat before us; so she preceded us in Egypt, and has had to retreat before us. France can make a brilliant start; but England rows a waiting race, and usually wins in the long-run.

The neutralisation of Egypt, as proposed by Mr Labouchere, without the right of re-entry by England, would manifestly have just

the same effect as our immediate evacuation of it. But England, after having borne the burden and heat of the day since 1882, is not going to see all the fruits of her labour thrown away in deference to the wounded sensibilities of any European State, still less of one who had it in her power to co-operate with us, if she had chosen to do so, when a fair opportunity was offered her.

The Opposition have made great play with the argument, to which Mr Courtney has given prominence, that, when our foreign relations both in Europe and America are in so unsettled a state, it is unwise to "lock up" a large portion of our troops in the Soudan. But there is no necessity whatever for denuding England of troops in order to occupy the Soudan. A portion of our Indian army could very well be spared for that purpose, and the native regiments are the very troops best fitted for the work. But there seems to be a general misconception in this country with regard to our method of proceeding, notwithstanding Lord Cromer's assurance, now familiar to us all, that we are to work with Egyptian hands and English heads. The greater part of the Egyptian army is now in excellent order, and, led by English officers, under the direction of English generals, will be able to give a very good account of the enemy whenever they come up with him. We learn as we write that a party of Osman Digna's Dervishes have just been defeated by an Egyptian force. The great task, which will devolve exclusively upon the English, is the reconstruction of an administrative system for the Soudan Province. She will have to do for this part of Egypt what she has done for the rest of it. That will be *her* task. But the number of

regular British troops which will be necessary to keep "locked up" in the Soudan will be comparatively insignificant. The few reverses experienced by the Khalifa will raise the whole country against him; and now that the population know what his rule is, if he once falls he will never rise any more. If the Anglo-Egyptian army once captures Khartoum, all danger would be over. At the same time, the Baggara are a fierce and warlike tribe, who, like all fanatics, will fight hard, and it is very doubtful how far a purely Egyptian army left to its own devices, and without the aid of English heads, could be trusted to gain that first decisive victory which would probably end the war. It is unnecessary to add that the defeat of the Egyptians, in anything like a great battle, would bring the whole horde of Dervishes into the valley of the Nile, and perhaps up to the gates of Cairo, without more ado. We have no doubt that Egyptian troops, under the immediate eye of their English leaders, and under the powerful moral influence exercised by permanent English occupation would fight well. But we cannot speak so confidently of what they would do without it. And nothing must be left to chance in such an affair as this.

In the black Egyptian troop from the South Soudan every confidence is placed. They are born soldiers. They hate the Dervishes and are never so happy as when engaged in a hand-to-hand fight. They are just as good men as our native regiments in India, and it is a pity that we have so few of them. The troops recruited from among the Fellaheen have not been so well tested, and they came to great grief under Valentine Baker

But they have behaved very well upon other occasions; and we are told by Major Griffiths that they once stood a charge of Dervish cavalry without flinching, and defeated it—one of the most formidable attacks that an infantry battalion can be exposed to. Take it all in all, therefore, we think the Opposition outcry against troops being "locked up" in the Soudan is about as empty as the rest of their auguries and assumptions.

One text on which certain highly moral members of the Opposition have dilated, with a solemnity almost lachrymose, is the duty of England to make it manifest to the whole world that whatever she is doing in Egypt she is doing for the good of the Egyptians, and not to aggrandise herself. Of course we all understand the meaning of this kind of sermon. It is simply meant to insinuate that her Majesty's Government are doing the very thing which the preacher is warning them not to do. This is an old rhetorical trick, but not one of the highest class, nor exactly consistent with that severe righteousness for which Sir William Harcourt, Sir Charles Dilke, and Mr Labouchere are deservedly celebrated. Great Britain may well wish to see a powerful independent State established between Victoria Nyanza and the Mediterranean. There is nothing strange in that; the Egyptians wish it too; and it can hardly be pretended that we are to set ourselves in opposition to Egyptian ideas and Egyptian interests because they happen to coincide with our own. As for anything in the shape of annexation, the Opposition know perfectly well that it is entirely out of the question; and merely to hint that any statesman in a responsible situation is so much as

dreaming of such a thing, is the part not merely of a fool but of something worse—*quod dicere nolo*.

Finally, Ministers are reproached with throwing such a burden on the Egyptian Treasury; and Mr Morley thought that he had made a great point when he charged the Government with spending on military expeditions merely in the interests of England money that might have been devoted to the internal improvement of Egypt—on irrigation works, for instance. Here, again, Mr Morley had not informed himself of the facts. It was pointed out to him that the money referred to could not have been legally spent on such objects; and while we are on the subject of Egyptian finance we may refer to the possibility that England should guarantee the Egyptian debt, and convert it into Government stock. The suggestion has much to recommend it; but it is too large a subject to enter upon at the fag-end of an article.

The debates on the Egyptian question and the speeches which have been made upon it by leading Liberal politicians are a sufficient proof that the party has decided on adhering to modern methods of Opposition, and on harassing the Government at every point, though they know it is impossible to defeat them. The system is bad enough when it affects only home affairs; but when foreign politics are pressed into the service of the Obstructionists, and every effort is made not only to waste time but to entrap Ministers into some unwary admission which may afterwards be used against them, or some premature announcement likely to be injurious to the public interests, it becomes ten times more mischievous. It is not our intention to write a history of obstruction in the House of Commons from the opening of Parliament

above reply from the President of the Board of Trade, that the Opposition, true to their reckless policy, threw themselves on the Government with question after question, one very often only a repetition of the other, as to the Egyptian expedition, and our communications with Foreign Powers relating to it. Mr Labouchere's natural taste for mischief, which he shares with the monkey and the magpie, of course pushed him into the fray, and in this kind of work he is in his proper place. But Sir William Harcourt is an experienced statesman who knows the difficulties of diplomacy, and the harm that may be done by premature discussion of negotiations which are still in progress, or of military movements which depend for their success on secrecy. He must have been perfectly well aware that it would be highly impolitic, as well as highly irregular, for Ministers to publish to the world at this stage of the question what they have said to Foreign Powers, or Foreign Powers have said to them, concerning the advance up the Nile. The question of the Caisse is an isolated one, and could be answered without any reference to general policy. Advances from it are permissible for "extraordinary expenses"; and Mr Balfour was able to tell the House that Germany, Italy, and Austria had consented to such an advance being made, and that from France and Russia no answer had been received. This was all that Sir William Harcourt got out of Mr Balfour; but it was not all that he would have liked to get out of him, for it really told nothing which was not practically known already. Neither Mr Morley nor Mr Labouchere nor Mr Redmond were more successful, and so the matter dropped, without any

harm having been done. But the *animus* displayed was unmistakable: and if this is the spirit in which the Government are to be catechised as long as any foreign question remains unsettled, it will be necessary for Ministers to consider very seriously what attitude they shall assume towards their interrogators. Even on this occasion Mr Balfour was obliged at last to say shortly that no further papers could be laid before the House then.

We have already said all that is necessary of the debate which followed on the 20th. The worst specimen of faction was reserved for the 30th, the day before the Education Bill was brought in. Mr Balfour then moved that the House should adjourn for the Easter recess when it rose after the morning sitting on the following day (Tuesday) till the next Thursday week, Government business to have precedence, and the House to rise as soon as it was finished. The business of Monday evening, after the Naval Works Bill had been read a third time, was Supply, and the Government were desirous of going into Committee that night, so that Supply might be proceeded with continuously as soon as the House re-assembled without any further debate. This is technically called getting the Speaker out of the chair, and the Opposition did all they knew to prevent this from being accomplished. First of all a discussion was raised on Mr Balfour's motion, which lasted very nearly three hours. Then came Mr Goschen's bill, which, though it had been amply discussed at all its previous stages, was easily made in practised hands to yield another debate of two hours and a half. Then between half-past nine and ten the motion

was put "that the Speaker do leave the chair"; whereupon, we regret to say, two Conservatives took up the work of obstructionists, just to give the other side breathing time as it were. Mr Gibson Bowles forthwith moved "That it is the duty of her Majesty's advisers to take such steps as may be required to fulfil her Majesty's Treaty engagements relative to the Ottoman Empire, entered into for the security of her Majesty's oriental possessions." After this wanton waste of time the debate was prolonged by the Welsh and Irish members till nearly three o'clock, when at last Mr Gully was allowed to retire, and the House went into Committee. Thus the Government had achieved their object, and all that the House had to do was to receive the report of the Vote on Account. But this could not be allowed without keeping the House sitting for another two hours. Mr Labouchere jumped up to press for further explanations on the Soudan expedition, more especially with regard to what had passed between the Government and Lord Cromer. To this Mr Balfour replied with justifiable curtness that

"if the hon. gentleman supposed, with regard either to Egypt or any other question, the Government were going to lay on the table of the House all the details and all the heads of the discussions which had taken place between the Government and their advisers, he was greatly mistaken. On such principles no Government could possibly be carried on, and they in this respect were merely following the precedents which all other Governments had set."

With this answer Mr Labouchere was obliged to be satisfied. But the Radicals—Welsh, English, and combined to worry the the House for another

two hours, though nothing on earth could be gained by it, and then the curtain fell on one of the most discreditable scenes which has ever been witnessed in the House of Commons.

Sir William Harcourt was the prime offender. He gave his party "a line," as they say out hunting, which they followed up over hedge and ditch, with a courage and perseverance worthy of a better cause. Sir William's main complaint was that the Government were bringing in a bill of such importance as the Education Bill on the day when the House adjourned for the holidays; and he said that this need not have happened if the Government on previous days for which the Education Bill was on the paper had not put down other contentious matter before it, which had prevented its introduction. The answer to this is that neither the Vote on Account nor the Naval Works Bill need have been contentious business unless Sir William Harcourt and his friends had chosen to make it so. When the Diseased Animals Act was put down before the Vote on Account, the latter had already been discussed for a whole night—as much as is generally given to it. And when the Naval Works Bill was put down before the Education Bill, the Government had no reason to suppose that it would occupy more than a few hours, or in any way prevent the introduction of the latter. In these calculations the Government no doubt had been mistaken; but whose fault was it? The complaint about the Education Bill being brought in on the day of adjournment was all nonsense. The first reading of a bill of that character is almost always accepted without a division; and the House of Commons was allowed the whole Easter

recess and a fortnight more for mastering its details.

But why beat about the bush? Nobody knows better than Sir William Harcourt himself what that all-night sitting of March 30th and 31st really meant. The object of the Opposition was to keep the Speaker in the chair till the House reassembled after Easter, and then to renew the debate on the motion for his leaving it with fresh vigour and determination. On the Monday night, if Sir William Harcourt had not intervened, the Naval Works Bill could have been finished by five o'clock, and the House would have had the whole of a long evening for any question they chose to raise before going into Supply. The discussion set going by the leader of the Opposition was absolute waste of time—obstruction pure and simple; and we defy the warmest partisan of the Radical Liberals to place any other construction on it that will hold water for a moment.

We have gone through these rather tedious details because they help to bring home to us a lesson which, notwithstanding the experience of recent years, is as yet but imperfectly comprehended by the people of this country. No matter how powerful a Government may be, it has no real control over the well-recognised, long-established system on which the proceedings of the House of Commons are conducted. New rules of procedure may from time to time be passed to check particular abuses; but they only stop one hole in the sieve, and many remain which never can be stopped at all. Nor is it always well that they should be. It is necessary that there should be some safety-valve in Parliament for ill humour, for disappointment, for political

and personal animosities, as well as freedom of debate for important public questions. But necessary or not, our English Parliament has gradually grown up upon a plan which yields innumerable facilities for these effusions such as could hardly be removed without danger to the entire fabric. Our sole protection against the abuse of these facilities lies in the good sense and moderation of those who are opposed to the Government; and when this safeguard is wanting, the public will look in vain to the strongest Administration for any other. Against an Opposition led by able men, which concentrates its energies on a single object, and turns neither to the right nor to the left in pursuit of it; which takes advantage of every regular and every accidental opportunity for the furtherance of one purpose; which combines practised acuteness with sleepless vigilance, and veils, under a show of great solicitude for the freedom of Parliament, a deliberate contempt for those unwritten laws which are essential to its dignity and utility,—against an Opposition of this kind it is impossible for any Government to contend without being exposed to numerous reverses and discomfitures. He will be the wisest Minister who confines his legislative projects within such limits as shall leave an ample margin for hostilities of this nature, and is content with complete success on one or two important questions, without courting discredit by the failure or mutilation of more extensive plans.

We are too much in the habit of talking as if a Government with a very large majority was necessarily in a position to put down obstruction—the truth being that in this particular respect a

large majority has no more power than a small one; and if the present Opposition only goes on as it has begun, the public must not be disappointed if the session in the end yields a very much smaller harvest than was at first anticipated. We are promised, however, a plentiful crop of weeds. "Uncompromising resistance," "from top to bottom, from first to last," is the *mot d'ordre* which we know from experience to mean only pertinacious and indiscriminate obstruction. The word has gone forth against both the Education Bill and the Agricultural Ratings Bill; and we know that, as regards the latter, the attack will be founded on objections so flimsy and frivolous that we only wonder how they can be repeated by impartial and intelligent critics. It is monstrous to complain of the Bill for being a class measure, when we are positively assured by the Minister that he recognises the grievances of other classes as well as the agricultural, and that these will have their turn as soon as the Government are in a position to take up the whole question of local taxation, into which they are about to institute a preliminary inquiry. It is equally nonsensical to call it a measure for the relief of landlords, when it is perfectly well known that if the landlord takes advantage of it to raise his rents, he will rob the concession¹ of all value in the eyes of the farmer, and find it just as difficult as ever to obtain tenants. The hollowness of such arguments as we

have mentioned sufficiently betrays the purpose for which they will be used—not to make converts, but only to kill time. And we ask once more, is this what the Opposition really means? Do they really and deliberately tell us that they are prepared to strain to the utmost those powers of distraction and interruption which the parliamentary system undoubtedly places in their hands, for the sole purpose of destroying the credit of the Government by preventing it from meeting its engagements. If this is so, we can only refer our readers to what we said on this subject last January. If our existing constitution is powerless to cope with this aggravated form of party spirit, we cannot be far from some vital and organic change in it. Two conflicting novelties have been growing up together during the last ten or twenty years, which are utterly irreconcilable with each other—the new system of Opposition, and the new demand for legislation. These have both come into being since the palmy period so dear to Mr Gladstone passed away. May we not therefore take one or both as marks of decadence—the inability to recognise the force of constitutional obligations, and the impatient egotism which floods the House of Commons with the loquacity of social intolerance? The English constitution has great recuperative powers; but unless we are greatly mistaken, they will in the course of another generation be put to a severe test.

¹ The reduction of the basis of assessment to one-half of the net rateable value.

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A NAVAL UTOPIA.

THE ship of war in our days has become the peculiar province of the inventor—of the man whose business it is to cram the largest total of destructive energy and resisting power into the smallest compass of weight and space. Mechanics, chemistry, metallurgy, hydraulics, electricity—every science has added its quota to the development of the modern man-of-war. And the results are so infinitely complex, so infinitely various, and above all so incessantly and endlessly changing, that it is no wonder the inexpert mind has long given over the labour of counting them, and has resigned itself to consider each step in naval progress as one further grope into the darkness. Experiment can show us that such a thickness of steel treated by such a process will break up such a projectile; that such a mounting will enable such a gun to be fired six times where before it was fired once;

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that such an explosive will burst with so many times the violence of such another. But experiment alone is but a one-eyed guide; to make even an approach to certainty it must be reinforced by experience. The engines of naval war must be tested not only by the dispassionate conclusions of the proving-ground, but by the far tenser strain of real battle. We must know—every shipbuilding nation is most vitally concerned to know—not only what the machines can do by themselves, but what they can do when men are fighting for their lives behind them. Unhappily for naval science—happily for all other interests—such experience during the forty years of the life of modern warships has been rare and inconclusive. The effect is that the opinion of naval architects and naval officers is left halting between experiment and experience. And the very infrequency of actual fighting

The archetype of this autonomous unit is the Dupuy-de-Lôme. This vessel, generally classed as an armoured cruiser, was launched in 1890, but not completed until some years later. She is of 6300 tons displacement, 374 feet long, of 51 feet 6 inches beam, and 23 feet 6 inches draught. She steams 17·5 knots an hour with natural, and 20 with forced, draught; and is reckoned able to make 4000 miles at 12·5 knots without coaling. She is armoured—and this is her most distinctive feature—with 4·7 inches of steel throughout her whole length and almost over the whole surface of the hull. For heavy armament she carries two 7·6-inch breechloaders and six 6·3-inch Canet quick-fire guns, besides numerous smaller quick-firers; the heavy guns are so mounted that she can fire five of them ahead, astern, or on either broadside.¹ This formidable type Admiral Fournier proposes to strengthen and develop into the unit of his homogeneous fleet, which is to be equal indifferently to every service demanded of a warship. The displacement he would increase to about 8300 tons, and would devote the 2000 tons thus gained to an increase in the speed, the radius of action, the offensive power of the quick-firing armament, and the resisting power of the armour. The two 7·6-inch breechloaders would be replaced by the largest quick-firing pieces obtainable: Canet already builds a quick-fire gun of 9·4 inches, and Lord Armstrong's firm has mounted 8-inch guns on several South American cruisers: this change should mean an enormous gain in rapidity of discharge. At the same time the 4·7-inch armour would be thickened to 6 inches of steel hardened by

the Harvey process, which represents the resistance of over 10 inches of wrought iron. The result is thus described by Admiral Fournier: "A vessel capable of keeping the sea in all weathers, not liable to meet any foreign warship which she cannot outstrip or equal in speed, and fight with at least an even chance of victory, and capable of being employed indifferently, and thus under the conditions most favourable to the success of our arms, to all the war-services of our strategy and tactics." The cost he reckons at £400,000 for each ship, and the period of building at two years. Laying down four or five a-year, he would thus obtain in twenty-five years—by which time all existing French warships would be obsolete—a homogeneous fleet of 117 ships. Of these he would maintain in the Mediterranean four squadrons and in the Channel three squadrons of nine ships apiece; another nine would be stationed on the west coast of France, while eight would radiate from Martinique, six from Dakar, six from Madagascar, fifteen from Indo-China, and ten from New Caledonia. These would be supported by 300 torpedo-boats, both for coast defence and to accompany the larger vessels to sea.

For this fleet and for this type Admiral Fournier claims, to put it plumply, that it is the best fleet and the best warship that the mind of man can conceive. Every warship, it is now a platitude to say, is a compromise of excellences—speed, coal-capacity, protection, and armament—each of them unattainable in its full measure without detriment to the others. Hitherto it has been the universal practice of naval nations to specialise their war-

¹ At least this is the theory; it is doubtful whether five guns could actually be so fired simultaneously in action.

vessels, adapting each class to one distinct function. Thus speed and coal-capacity are sacrificed to some extent in the battleship, and still more in the coast-defender, on condition of attaining a superior strength of armour and guns which will fit the vessel to fight in line. In the cruiser, on the other hand, such equipment is sacrificed in a corresponding degree to speed and endurance. Each class is built with an eye to the dominant function it has to perform, and a squadron is incomplete without ships specially built for each such function. But Admiral Fournier would change all this: each ship, he insists, ought to be equal in itself to the discharge of all the necessary duties of war.

It may be allowed at once that the advantages of homogeneity are great and incontestable. Every sailor in the fleet would know his ship from the first moment of commissioning. Not only officers and men, but guns, mountings, and every kind of machinery, could be transferred from one ship to find their place instantly on another. Homogeneity would remedy the slowness and inequality of promotion which tends to discourage the French *lieutenant de vaisseau*. And financially it would save France four million francs a-year, which is the sum estimated to be spent every year on modifications of ships during construction. The two last considerations are domestic to France, but the first is of universal application. That our own Admiralty realises the advantages of homogeneous squadrons, both in this respect and as simplifying problems of strategy and tactics, is demonstrated by the fact that it can build nine identical *Magnificents* and eight *Royal Sovereigns*, while it hardly ever lays down less than a pair of ships of any type. The French navy is largely com-

posed of isolated designs, and contains no larger class than 1 among battleships and four 1 cruisers. But while there is unquestionable advantage in gr of identical ships, — provided course, that the type is not a one, like our own *Comus* and sisters; in which case the ide of the group means simply multiplication of one blunder nine,—the formation of a fle of similar groups is not at all same thing as its absolute ide from the first ship to the last. violent a revolution can only defended on the ground that unit of this fleet is equal or supe for all possible purposes to 1 other ship that might be built an equal cost with a view to purpose only. That is to say, t a million pounds' worth of Adm Fournier's improved Dupuy-Lômes must be as good or bet for fighting a fleet action tha million pounds' worth of any kno type of battleship, better for in pendent cruising than a mill pounds' worth of any known ty of cruiser, and so on for all p poses.

This position Admiral Fourn gallantly essays to establish. T first advantage, he alleges, is 1 advantage of number. The m individual ships you buy for certain sum, the better, says so long as they are large enough keep the sea in any weather wi out loss of speed. There are doubt conceivable cases when 1 big ship would be better than t smaller ones: for instance, if 1 *Magnificent* were to fight two the improved Dupuy-de-Lôm one on each broadside, she wo be able at one discharge to p 2300 lb. of shot into each her antagonists for 560 lb. s would receive. But in pract the two Frenchmen would not found taking up a position so c

siderately adapted to the enemy's convenience; while on the other side, it is an obvious strategical advantage that you can divide your two Dupuy-de-Lôme, if necessary, while your one Magnificent cannot propagate herself by fission. Moreover, in case of torpedo attack, the small ships have two chances to the big ship's one. As against more expensive ships, therefore,—but obviously only as against these,—Admiral Fournier's type has the advantage of number.

He next explains the enormous value to a ship of war of a wide radius of action and of a high speed. Nobody will deny it. Steam, which has enabled the modern battleship to go whither she will whatever wind may blow, has fettered this liberty with the condition that without coal she may go nowhither, fair wind or foul. A deficiency in coal-capacity may thus at any moment reduce the most powerful ship afloat to a log on the water, waiting only for night and torpedo-boats to go to the bottom. What coal-endurance is to strategy, speed is to tactics. It has taken the place of the weather-gage; as Admiral Fournier insists again and again, it enables the squadron which possesses it to choose the mode of combat best adapted to its own capabilities. Superior speed may often give the lighter combatant the victory; it can always save him from annihilation. But it is most unfortunate that our author never once tells us what exactly the coal-endurance and speed of his ship are to be. In one passage, already quoted, he says that they are both to be

greater than in the Dupuy-de-Lôme. But later (p. 89), and that when he has left generalising and is engaged with exact calculations, he estimates that the whole of the 2000 tons added to the displacement of the present Dupuy-de-Lôme will be needed to increase the thickness of the belt and of the armour on the principal gun-positions.¹ We must therefore leave the endurance of the new ship at 4000 miles at 12½ knots, and her speed, with induced and forced draught respectively, at 17·5 and 20 knots. This is a very important point, as we shall see when we come to consider the chances of a fleet engagement between Admiral Fournier's projected squadron and a squadron of battleships built on the principles which European nations have hitherto adopted.

Pursuing the analysis of the autonomous unit, we come next to the question of armour and guns. Admiral Fournier delivers a vigorous attack on the method of armouring battleships in favour with the French Admiralty, and it seems to us that his attack strikes home. The French system has been to protect the water-line by a continuous but narrow belt of great thickness, while leaving the rest of the hull unprotected except the barbettes or turrets carrying the heaviest guns. Against this method our author brings forward two principal contentions. First, the belt is so narrow that at the ordinary draught of a ship it sinks below water until it is entirely submerged, so that it only protects the surface below the water-line

¹ The *Jeanne d'Arc*, to be laid down this year, has about the speed—20 knots at natural and 23 at forced draught—which Admiral Fournier appears to contemplate for his type. But the *Jeanne d'Arc*, although of nearly the same armament and lighter armour than the Dupuy-de-Lôme, displaces 11,270 tons, or close on 3000 tons more than Admiral Fournier's type. We may conclude that French naval architects are as yet unable to get all the power he desiderates into a compass of 8300 tons.

where no projectile can threaten it. Second—and here we recognise the teaching of the battle of the Yalu—the introduction of heavy quick-firing pieces and high explosives has made this method of protection obsolete. The first point is not altogether conclusive. As the ship rolls in a sea-way the actual water-line varies with the roll: a belt whose lower edge runs along the normal water-line will thus with the roll expose a large extent of the unarmoured bottom to very destructive injuries which a belt, normally submerged but emerging with the roll, might easily prevent. But the second point is far more cogent—is indeed unanswerable. All the unarmoured side above the belt is exposed to be riddled by high-explosive shells: the secondary armament will be put out of action, stores of ammunition will probably be exploded, any wooden structure set on fire, and the complement of the ship decimated in a few minutes. It is true that in the later battleships building for the French navy the secondary guns are protected by at least an inch or two of armour-plating. But the ammunition-hoists are still exposed to disablement, and a shell exploding underneath a heavy gun between the lower edge of its own turret and the upper edge of the belt might very conceivably put it out of action for good and all. It is for this reason that in our later battleships Sir William White, while still leaving bow and stern wholly unarmoured, has plated the whole side with a sufficient thickness of Harvey steel—9 inches in the *Magnificent*, 6 in the new improved *Renowns*—to keep out the heavier quick-fire shells. Admiral Fournier's way of meeting the difficulty is analogous to this, but far bolder. He frankly abandons the heavy

armour and heavy guns that characterise the battleship: all his pieces are to be quick-firing, and none of his armour is to exceed 6 inches. Of course this leaves his fleet completely vulnerable, not only to the heavy guns carried by British battleships, but also at close quarters to the 6-inch Armstrong quick-firer. As a defence against this he proposes to use the superior speed of his ships, and to manœuvre so as to receive no projectile directly, but only on the bow or quarter at such an angle that they will break up or ricochet without penetrating. By an ingenious calculation he establishes—so far at least as trigonometry can do it—that no known projectile can pierce 6 inches of Harvey plating so long as it strikes at an inclination to the surface of not more than 50°. As long, therefore, as the side of the new Dupuy-de-Lôme can be kept inclined at an angle of 50° or less to the enemy's line of fire, she should remain impregnable to all shot and shell in existence. If this theory is correct and will really work out in action, then farewell to the battleship. The 9-inch armour and 46-ton guns of the *Magnificent* and her sisters are wellnigh as utterly useless as if we had thrown the metal into the sea.

We are now in possession of Admiral Fournier's case, and able to analyse the value of the type he recommends in its three aspects of scout, cruiser, and battleship. "No combination"—thus he sums up the matter—"would give us, for the resources of our Budget, a greater number of vessels, fitted indifferently for all services of war and best adapted to combat the enemy, than the homogeneous fleet we have in view, supported by a numerous flotilla of sea-going torpedo-boats." And he founds this declaration on a mathematical

calculation showing that for each ton added to the displacement of 8300, and therefore for each pound added to the cost of £400,000, there is obtained less and less maximum speed, less radius of action, and less offensive force. If, therefore, the ship so obtained is equal to all its functions, it is doubtless the most economical that can be built; it will possess also the vast advantage that every unit of it will be available for any duty with which the admiral in command may see fit to intrust it. A look-out ship, for instance, that can take her place in the line of battle when the work of scouting is done and the enemy brought to action, will at that moment be worth a dozen of the small unarmoured cruisers at present built by European navies for scouting work, which can do little more than observe the combat, through most of its stages, at a safe distance. But when we consider the task of scouting in itself, the superiority of the homogeneous fleet appears more open to question. The function of a scout is to scout, and the quality requisite for this is the maintenance of a high continuous speed at sea—not a spurt under forced draught, which would always be liable to disable the boilers after a few hours, but a long spell of hard steaming at natural draught. Now, the natural-draught speed of the ship under examination is 17·5 knots. That is no doubt fast enough to bring her into touch with any squadron of battleships; but it would be hopelessly inadequate when employed, let us say, against a small squadron of cruisers such as the *Edgar*, which has twice run twenty-four hours together at 19·75 knots. This is no doubt a favourable case; but it must be remembered that we are crediting the *Dupuy-de-Lôme* with her full speed on paper, which in practice

she might find it difficult to maintain. The efficiency of a scout further depends, not only on the power of getting information of the enemy's movements, but on the swiftness with which the information gained can be conveyed to the proper quarter. On one single hour sooner or later might hang all the difference between success or failure. If this is so, is it not plain that the *Edgar* would do scouting work more efficiently—that is, with a better chance of bringing her information in time to enable a commander-in-chief to act effectively upon it—than the enlarged *Dupuy-de-Lôme*? Still less could this latter compete with armed ocean liners like the *Campania* for this purpose; but as the *Campania* would not be available from the first moment of war, we will leave her out of the comparison. There is also another question—that of expense. The scouting work of the existing French squadrons is confided to small cruisers, such as the *Cosmao* class of 1877 tons and the same natural-draught speed—17·5 knots—as the *Dupuy-de-Lôme*. These ships cost about £133,000 apiece—that is to say, that three of them can be bought for the same price as one of Admiral Fournier's units. To this he would answer, like the practical seaman he shows himself from first to last, that the ships, possibly excellent for their purpose in the Mediterranean, would lose speed in contending against any sea. No ship, in his judgment, is fit for work in all waters and all weathers unless she displaces at least 6000 tons. We may allow this point as good against the *Cosmao*; but there is reason to think that our own constructors have solved the problem of a fast seagoing ship, with a considerable economy upon the displacement which he regards as the

with good reason. The improved Dupuy-de-Lôme would be a terrible menace to our commerce in time of war. Her 6-in. mail would give her a tremendous advantage over the unarmoured deck-protected cruisers, which would be all we could pit against her. Such of them as she could overtake she would destroy without difficulty. Such as had the legs of her would be safe; but what would be the value to this country of a cruiser which was obliged to leave the sea to the enemy to be swept clear of British commerce? The fastest and most powerful of our cruisers, the Edgar, Blenheim, or Terrible, might use their superior speed and one or two heavier guns to fight a long-range action on the system of presenting themselves only obliquely to the enemy's fire, as expounded by our author himself. But they would have little chance of putting her out of action, and every shell penetrating their unarmoured sides would cause horrible destruction. Or they might use their higher speed to close at once, and trust to their heavier armament to overwhelm the enemy. But even so, many of their inadequately protected guns might easily be put out of action before the range became short enough to do much damage to the armoured side of their antagonist. And it must be remembered as a cardinal principle that every action, even if in itself indecisive, which leaves a hostile cruiser at large on the high seas is strategically a British defeat. Perhaps the only cruisers afloat that could meet the new Dupuy-de-Lôme on equal terms are the American New York and Brooklyn, or, better still, the Esmeralda, just launched for Chili by Messrs Armstrong. She is almost as completely protected as the new Dupuy-de-Lôme would be, her speed is greater, and her arma-

ment far more powerful. She, without doubt, could rush in and finish the matter out of hand with her quick-firers. Yet for anything like the Esmeralda you may search in vain through the British navy.

But the operations of isolated cruisers, however damaging, are not likely to be decisive in a naval war. England was beggared by commercial losses more than once during the Napoleonic struggle; but our fleets never ceased to keep the sea, and in the end we swept off all hostile cruisers, and pursued our trade almost unmolested. In the same way the Alabama and her Confederate companions destroyed the mercantile shipping of the North, but the fighting strength of the Northern navy remained unchallenged and decisive. It is now—thanks to such writers as Admiral Colomb and Mr Spenser Wilkinson—accepted as a first principle of naval warfare that victory can only be gained by the command of the sea. The side which can annihilate the enemy's fleets, or keep them penned in their ports by a superior force, has gained the command of the sea, and is then in a position to strike home. If France secured this advantage, the mortal blow would take the form of an invasion of England. If England secured it, we should at least be safe from invasion,—for any descent on our shores without the sea held behind it would be in the end far more disastrous to the invader than to us,—while by destroying French commerce and isolated French warships, by reducing French colonies and similar operations, we should endeavour to convince the enemy that she had nothing to gain by continuing the war. Now we have all supposed hitherto that the force by which this decisive command of the sea is to be won and enforced is

bettes would be impervious to all the French pieces but one; the French ship would be vulnerable to all the ten English guns, which would perhaps fire armour-piercing shot and bursting shell alternately. Who can doubt the result? The Frenchman would certainly come out of that terrific storm a hopeless wreck; the Englishman would almost as certainly be ready to face the next. How many of the eighteen the Magnificent would thus dispose of before she were put out of action is a matter too conjectural for profitable inquiry, but it is surely a very low estimate that she would account for at least two. And even if she disabled only two, the relative strength of the combatants would be just what it was before. It must be allowed that Admiral Fournier seems himself to shrink from the consequences of so direct an encounter, for he recommends this mode of attack only in two cases: when the French fleet is suffering too much from the fire of the enemy, and when it is supported by a preponderant torpedo flotilla. As for the first case, if the new type suffered too much from an oblique fire, how much more, considering its comparatively unprotected sides, would it not suffer from a direct broadside, when four instead of two big guns could bear? As for the second, we too have our torpedo flotilla. The moment for the French torpedo-boats would come just before the leading French ship came beam to beam with the leading British battleship: masked by the fire of their friends, they would dash upon her and endeavour to send her to the bottom. The answer to that menace is that we should have our destroyers ready to sink the hostile torpedo-boat with gunfire, and, if occasion offered, to

sink the autonomous type with the torpedo. And if the torpedo-destroyers lately commissioned with the Channel and Particular Service squadrons have in many cases proved too fragile to keep the sea uninjured in all weathers, that is only the more reason for believing that the smaller and frailer French torpedo-boats would be still less seaworthy. It is safe to say that for one case when the weather had robbed our fleet of its torpedo-destroyers there would be three when the homogeneous fleet would be bereaved in like manner.

But it is easy to see that it is not in this sudden attack that Admiral Fournier puts his chief hope. His favourite action is evidently what he calls the artillery combat at a limited distance, which is the systematisation of Admiral Ito's tactics at the battle of the Yalu. The general scheme of it is easy to explain, though the theorem on which it rests is too technical for every landsman's digestion. The admiral whose fleet is the speedier describes round his adversary, in line-ahead, a logarithmic spiral such that the cosine of the angle formed by his course with any possible course of the enemy shall always be equal to the proportion of the enemy's speed to his own. In less alarming language, the admiral of the faster squadron first takes up his position at the distance from the enemy—say, 1500 to 3000 yards—at which he desires the artillery duel to be fought: he then, by looking up his table of logarithms, is able to steer such a course constantly ahead of the enemy that the two fleets will never approach nearer than the initial distance. The possibility of this Admiral Fournier demonstrates by sheer trigonometry, and the result of applying the theorem is that the faster French ship will

constantly present her quarter to the enemy, while the enemy will present her bow to the Frenchman. This theorem applies equally to single combats and to fleet-actions, only in the latter the distance to be maintained must be measured from the hindmost ship in the line, which is nearest the enemy. For this formation Admiral Fournier claims two main advantages: first, that the slower or interior line finds the fire of its rearward ships masked by the leading vessels; and, secondly, that while the faster circling line receives the enemy's fire on its quarter at an angle to the surface of its armour-plates of under 50° , so that shot glances off harmless, the interior or British line receives all the fire on its unarmoured bow.

But if Admiral Fournier—to take up again the imaginary battle between eighteen of his type and nine Magnificents—expects to win a decisive victory by this formation, it may reasonably be asked whether he has not misread the lesson of the Yalu. It may be conceded that Admiral Ito owed his victory primarily to his superiority in speed and quick-firing ordnance; and secondly, but not less essentially, to his brilliant tactical inspiration of circling round the enemy in line-ahead, which gave him the full fruition of that superiority. Yet Admiral Ito's victory at the Yalu was not a victory of cruisers over ironclads. It was a victory of cruisers over weaker cruisers—a victory, also, impaired by the presence of ironclads on the beaten side. The Chinese battleships, the Ting Yuen and Chen Yuen, endured towards the close of the fight the whole volume of the Japanese fire. They carried out of action about 200 shot-dints apiece, and their unarmoured ends especially were riddled by the numerous quick-

firing pieces mounted by Admiral Ito's squadron. Yet at the end of the day they still remained in line battle-worthy and replying to the fire of the enemy; they both returned safely to port, and a month afterwards were ready for action again: the Chen Yuen is at this moment a valued member of the Japanese fleet. On the other hand, the Matsushima, Admiral Ito's unarmoured flagship, was put out of action by a single 12-inch shell from the Chen Yuen. A heap of ammunition was set afire, two 4.7-inch guns were disabled, and out of the whole complement of 360, no less than 111 were killed or wounded; whereas the two Chinese ironclads lost between them in killed and wounded no more than 61. It is quite plain that this can have been in no sense a victory of the fast, quick-firing cruiser over the armoured battleship. To return to our hypothetical combat, the principal point established by the behaviour of the two Chinamen is that it is not so easy to disable a battleship by shattering her unarmoured bow as foreign writers have often assumed. The leading British ships in the line would have to sustain a fearful hail of shot and shell, and would doubtless suffer most severely. But the fire from the eighteen ships of the French fleet would not bear upon them with anything like equal intensity, as will readily be seen. Let us suppose that the French admiral decides to fight at a range of 1500 yards—which means that the rearmost ship in his line maintains at least that distance from the foremost ship of the enemy. If the range were less, the British fleet might easily form up in line abreast and shatter the hindmost ships with a converging fire: even at 1500 yards, with an enemy not much inferior in speed,

the French admiral would have this danger to fear. Now, supposing the rearmost French ship maintains this distance from the head of the British column, where will the leading ship be? Supposing the ships following each other at intervals of one cable—and to steam at high speed in such close order would be to invite the risk that any ship disabled would be run down by a friend—the first ship would be perhaps 3000 yards ahead of the eighteenth, and therefore out of effective range of the enemy. The line must keep heading away from the slower enemy, for if the leading ships circled round within range of the British heavy guns they would expose their weak broadsides and invite destruction. If, on the other hand, the French line only turned back towards the following British when out of range of its guns, the leading vessels would themselves, with their lighter guns, be still more incapable of injuring the enemy than the enemy would be of injuring them. It seems to follow from this that the converging fire on the foremost British ship would be nothing like the fire of the whole fleet. Each Frenchman within range could bring to bear on the enemy four quick-firers of 6 to 8 inches calibre training over the quarter; to these the leading British ship could reply with two very heavy guns, and at least three 6-inch quick-firers. The British ship would be liable to have her unarmoured bow riddled, and possibly have her forward guns put out of action. The Frenchman would expose her quarter and her stern; her guns might be put out of action, and also, since some part of her stern might present a square target, she might have her armour pierced. More than this, in any sea she might easily suffer damage to her

rudder, perhaps even to her screws, which would render her unmanageable. After all, it would be difficult to fight a fleet-action by the book of logarithms, and the slightest failure to keep station would be to expose the stern to be raked by the pursuer. Now, mark the consequence of disablement in each case. The destruction of the unarmoured forepart of the *Magnificent* would not sink the ship, but would only reduce her speed, and as the fleet of *Magnificents* is by hypothesis the slower, this should be no serious damage. She might have to fall out of line, but even this would not be necessary. On the other hand, suppose a French ship from any injury lost her speed or became unmanageable; she must necessarily fall out of line, unless the whole squadron is to let the British, with their heavier guns and thicker armour, take it at the incalculable disadvantage of an action at close quarters. When the *Magnificent* fell out of line the rest of the squadron could circle round her and dare the enemy to dash in upon her. When the new *Dupuy-de-Lôme* fell out, her sisters must perforce abandon her, unless they wish to be shattered by a direct fire, and she falls an easy prey to the following fleet.

The general result appears to be that the nine *Magnificents* would be battered more than the Frenchmen, but would be able to stand it better; that they should make short work of any disabled *Dupuy-de-Lômes*, and could probably save any lame duck of their own. In any case, it is difficult to see how Admiral Fournier's fleet could hope for more than a drawn battle; in which case, why should it give battle at all? But there is another case which must be considered. Supposing that, instead of nine *Magnificents*, the British squadron consisted of twelve improved Re-

nouns, of the type of which Mr Goschen proposes to lay down five this year. These ships will probably steam about 18 knots with natural draught and 19 knots with forced. They would thus have half a knot an hour in hand of Admiral Fournier's fleet at natural draught, though they would be a knot behind when forcing their engines. It follows that the French must either give up the formation specially adapted to them or run their engines at a high pressure. Now, in a long engagement—and the tactics Admiral Fournier foreshadows necessarily presuppose a long engagement—some of the boilers are certain to become overheated and break down. Every French ship that breaks down must fall out of line, as we have seen, and either strike to the enemy or be sunk. In this case, then, more assuredly than in the other, the homogeneous fleet could hardly hope for a decisive victory, and might, with the worst of the luck, suffer a decisive defeat.

There remains one other possibility. The homogeneous fleet might abstain from important actions altogether, and set itself to starve Britain out by cutting off her import of food and raw material. Whether this could be done or not depends mainly on the spirit of the British people. If they were unwilling to face great national hardship, if a dear loaf and no work drove them on their knees to Paris, the thing could be done. But if we had the fortitude to endure a period of privation, the most powerful battle-fleet must win in the end. We could protect our supplies by a judicious distribution for convoy of battle-ships, which the hesitation of the French to fight, and their consequent dispersion, would set free

from the normal duty of observing the French naval ports. Meanwhile, if we had sufficient fighting force—as at present we have not—small squadrons would bar the entrance to all French arsenals and coaling-stations, so that no enemy could go in to refit without a fight. Left to themselves, the autonomous vessels would discover in time that there is no autonomy for the man-of-war whose country cannot command the sea. They might coal at sea or in neutral ports. But with the lapse of months they would become foul and slow and in need of docking; they would suffer damage even in winning fights which they would be allowed no opportunity to repair. So they would fall victims one by one, until the whole 117 disappeared off the ocean. And all the time we should have been carrying out our preconceived programme, stopping French commerce and reducing French colonies almost as if there were no French fleet at all.

We have, in sum, to thank Admiral Fournier for a most interesting and most instructive essay. He has adumbrated a very formidable type of fighting ship, of which we might profitably add a few examples to our own navy. He has enriched naval tactics with the fullest scientific deductions from the latest naval experience. We can congratulate France on the possession of so keen and capable a sailor, and we are quite sure that the officers under his tuition will receive lessons that, win or lose, will be of inestimable service to them if they are called to enter upon a war. But we cannot think, for all that he has taught us, that he has yet pointed his countrymen to a royal road for the annihilation of Britain.

CARDINAL MANNING.

THE motto on the title-page of the first volume warned us that this biography would be sensational, but we cannot agree that the strangeness of the career was limited to its Anglican period. Nor is Mr Purcell himself of that opinion, in spite of the triumphant lines which on his second title-page he applies to Manning as a Catholic. The drama is marked by the same characteristics all the way through. From the day when, as rector of Lavington, he rang the church bell with his own hands to summon the rustics to prayers before the day's work began, to the day when, at the Pope's right hand in an Ecumenical Council, he dictated a decision which added a new dogma to the Catholic faith, there is unbroken consistency of conduct, displaying all the virtues and all the vices of a turbulent and self-seeking ecclesiastic, using all the powers which from time to time accreted to him for the advancement of his order and of himself, but at the same time conscientiously for what he considered to be the good of his people.

It is not, however, by his exercise in his own proper person of Christian virtues as a philanthropist or as a man bent on doing good in his generation that Manning's life is to be judged. We may pay all due respect to his many high qualities and to his good deeds, some of them good more in intention than in their results. His life must be judged as that of an ecclesiastical statesman who concerned himself in

a conspicuous degree with what he calls (vol. i. p. 481) the outer sphere of the Church, its visible order of succession and government, and its claim in its corporate capacity to possess a supernatural and divine life and authority. The practical result so dear to the ecclesiastical mind is that the priest is armed with supernatural authority, and his flock, consisting of scared and obedient penitents, hang on his lips as the dispenser of their fate in a future world. The independence of Teutonic and Anglo-Saxon character has for three centuries recoiled from the monstrous absurdity of this claim. The nineteenth century has witnessed a remarkable movement to revive it, which will always be associated with the name of Newman. That movement prepared, in Mr Purcell's words (p. 652), rich and ample materials—stones for the hand of the master-builder—to help in building up again the Church of Rome in the land. Manning's chief office, according to his biographer, was to interpret Newman's ideas to the world at large, in his own person and by his acts. The result was to break down the insularity of English Catholicism, to introduce within its limits a race of converts at first more critical than appreciative, and consequently regarded as a nuisance; to re-establish a Catholic hierarchy in 1851; to multiply religious houses and the number of priests and Catholic institutions. Manning, however, at the close of his life was occupied in his autobiographical note with the subject

of the hindrances to the spread of Catholicism in England. We may accordingly infer that the failure of his hopes was more apparent than his successes, and we can hardly conceive it to be possible that the British race, either English or Scotch, would ever voluntarily re-enter that prison-house of the human spirit, the Roman Catholic Church, or ever regard the bastard imitation of it by a portion of the Anglican Church with any more friendly feeling than that of amused toleration.

Manning's character is interesting because of the object which he had in view, and the incessant activity with which, in a career conspicuous more for its personal achievement than for its intellectual or spiritual ascendancy, he pursued it. The biographer has no exaggerated estimate of whatever loyalty may be due to the confidence which Manning reposed in him. He has tracked his hero through all his devious courses with the sagacity of a sleuth-hound, and has laid bare its numerous failings in a spirit in which exultation is at least as visible on the surface of things as either regret or humiliation. We do not blame him in the least. There is no room for judicious suppression when the hero has himself been busy with fire and scissiors amongst his papers. A biographer, after such scant confidence reposed in him, is not bound to become an accessory after the fact, to conceal the suppressions already made and suppress more. He can hardly decline the task which he has promised to fulfil, and under the circumstances straightforward candour is the only course open to him.

Manning, it is clear, however much he may have hinted to the contrary, was not one of "the band

of earnest young men" who used to meet at Newman's rooms at Oriel. He left Oxford without any religious opinions. His chief accomplishment at the University, over and above a first-class in classics, was his fame at the Union as a political orator. His ambition was to enter Parliament, but his father's bankruptcy put an end to visions of that kind; "politics," he remarked, "without a penny in one's pocket is a bad trade." And at the same time he fell under the Evangelical influence of Robert Bevan and his sister, the latter pointing out to him that higher aims and heavenly ambitions were still open to him. Miss Bevan was his spiritual mother, but after he became a Catholic he begged her to return him his letters, as he said they might compromise him. "Of these letters not one has been preserved. Of hers not one has escaped the flames to bear witness to the source of Manning's early Puritanism." His own reminiscences, written fifty-seven years after the event, hint that his serious views and "revulsion from the Anglican Church" began at Oxford; but these reminiscences are not, it seems, always to be relied upon. At all events he obtained at first a refuge in the Colonial Office, and avoided the Church as a profession until the combined effect of his father's bankruptcy and a disappointment in love sent him back, against his wish, to Oxford to prepare for orders. At least his confidential letters of that date intimate to that effect; although half a century later he attributed the step he took to spiritual motives and a divine call.

He became curate of Lavington, and satisfied his Evangelical rector and all besides of the soundness of his theological views. In May 1833 his rector died. Shortly

afterwards he became engaged to the rector's daughter. In June the late rector's mother presented him with the living just vacated by her son, and in November of that year he married. Four years later his wife died. It seems to have been a perfectly happy marriage, during which husband and wife were devoted to their parish and to one another, and Manning at least paid to his wife's memory the tribute of intense grief at her loss. Marriage, however much it synchronised with ecclesiastical promotion at the time, was an awkward circumstance in the life of a Romish Cardinal and Archbishop. The "circumstance" accordingly was hushed up. "Providence," piously observes his biographer, "has a long arm, and God in His wisdom took her to Himself." The cold-blooded nature of the husband is shown in his indifference as time went on to his wife's memory; loyalty to love or to the comrade who had so early fallen by his side was inconvenient and was quenched. In 1880 two volumes of his letters were bequeathed to him by his brother. His ruthless scissors destroyed all the letters, 1833-37, which covered his married life. "So effectually," says his biographer, "was the story of his marriage suppressed that Catholics, with one or two exceptions, as well as the general public, knew nothing about his married life." Not the remotest allusion was made to it by the Cardinal in any of his innumerable letters, journals, diaries, note-books, and memoranda, or in his most intimate communications—except in 1880 one brief and formal apology for it, obviously intended for publication. In 1844-47, before his Catholic days, and while Anglicanism had possession of his mind,

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his diary refers to "God's ten special mercies," mentioning 1837, the year of his wife's death, as one of them. The disconsolate widower is represented in the only passage of the Life which he cared to see as sitting by his wife's tomb for hours composing his sermons. In later years, after he had, by his persistent neglect, forfeited the right to revere her memory, he refused even to repair it.

As rector Manning was a strict disciplinarian, an ecclesiastical martinet. He was an extreme Evangelical, a regular reader of the 'Record,' the object of its benedictions. In 1838 came the "Tracts for the Times." Tractarianism was "in the air." "Manning," says his biographer, "was quick in discerning that the Tractarian movement was becoming a power in the land." He entered into friendly relations with that party, and paid in that year his first visit to Rome with the blessing of Newman, with whom he was now on affectionate terms. There for the first time he met Dr Wiseman, whose veracity he had publicly but anonymously impugned only two years before. Shortly after his return he was made Archdeacon of Chichester, in spite of being regarded by his bishop as a "Romaniser" in disguise. But Manning's letters disabused the episcopal mind of all suspicion, and the appointment, which was generally approved, was his highest preferment in the English Church. In his new capacity he elected to break with Newman and the Tractarian party. Though as simple rector he might coquet with them without scandal, as a high official to be "implicated in any way with the Tractarian party at Oxford would, as he well knew, be destructive alike to his present work and future influence,

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and fatal to any hope or chance of ecclesiastical preferment." His annual charge as Archdeacon placed him in the front rank of the defenders of the English Church against "Romanising" tendencies on the one side, and popular Protestantism on the other. They were looked forward to with the utmost eagerness, more than fulfilled expectations, vindicated the Church of England as a standing witness to "the blessed results of the Reformation." They drew a broad line of demarcation between himself and the accused Tractarians, who had just seen Tract 90 condemned by the University authorities. He regarded the Reformation as "this gracious act of God's providence towards His Church;" they "as that great schism which shattered the sacrament of unity." He could not, however, escape the penalties of former association, do what he would. The temper of the time refused to discriminate between him and them; the hope of any "higher sphere of usefulness" grew dim.

In 1843 Newman retired to Littlemore, and there were forebodings of a wholesale declension to Rome. The 'Record' would not under those circumstances let Manning alone, mindful of "his apostasy from Gospel truth." It gibbeted him as a Tractarian; and not all his tact and prudence availed against the watchful enemy. He declined a newspaper controversy, and yet was bound to clear himself if he were to retain any hope of promotion. The occasion demanded something desperate. "Manning," says his biographer, "counting the cost, was equal to the occasion." He went down to Oxford, and on the day sacred to Guy Fawkes in the year 1843 preached an ultra-Protestant sermon.

The correspondence is published which shows the growing influence exercised by Newman and the Tractarian movement over Manning's mind in 1838-40 onwards to 1845, the date of Newman's conversion; also the correspondence, especially with Richard Wilberforce, 1847-50, which shows that doubts and difficulties in his mind were destroying his allegiance to the English Church. On this fatal 5th November 1845 Newman took no notice of desertion. His holding aloof as Archdeacon was condoned as too common under the circumstances.

"But what was remembered against him—by some unforgotten to this day—was that in the day of disaster, defeat, in a time of turmoil, popular outcry against Newman and the writers of the Tracts, the Archdeacon of Chichester fell not only in line with the protesting bishops but as one of the leaders of popular Protestantism, but smote with his own hands the idols that were down."

The crisis, however, had not yet reached. Manning had a letter in his pocket from Newman which announced his impending secession. He had shown it to Mr Gladstone who was thrown into the wildest excitement, staggering like a drunken man and at his wits' end as he expressed it, while Newman, like some Faust, was gambling with his soul. Manning preserved his composure a little better than Newman but saw the necessity of breaking with the Tractarians finally and unmistakably. He responded to the "No Popery" outcry against Newman by the violent and blasphemous Popery sermon just mentioned from the pulpit of St Mary's, Oxford, which Newman had just vacated. He launched forth in a style suited to Exeter Hall against the Catholic Church and Popes, hinting at

the Gunpowder Plot itself had been encouraged by Roman casuistry; the roof rang with his Protestantism. In an evil moment on the next day his former intimacy with Newman, doctrinal as well as personal, rose to his memory, and feeling the awkwardness of the situation, he hurried down to Littlemore to explain. The news of his sermon preceded him, and on his arrival the answer was "Not at home." He understood its meaning, says Mr Purcell, and so did all Oxford. "The 5th November sermon was extinguished in laughter. It is not only in France that *le ridicule tue*." The young man who took the message, and who tried to cover the slight by walking bareheaded half the way back to Oxford with the mortified Archdeacon, was James Anthony Froude. By the end of December, however, Manning's suppleness and Newman's magnanimity had restored their friendly relations. But although the sermon was condoned there was little or no communication afterwards between them. In 1845 Newman took the decisive step, convinced that "our Church is in schism, and that my salvation depends on my joining the Church of Rome." Manning remained; his hopes were not yet extinguished. Bishop Phillpotts said no power on earth could keep Manning from the Bench. Newman believed that he had a grand career before him in the English Church, but Mr Gladstone observes that after the full effect of Newman's secession was felt, after the Papal aggression, "both we and Disraeli had made up our minds not to give the mitre to any one connected with the 'unholy thing.'" Manning's relations with the Tractarians, begun while he was the Evangelical rector of Lavington, pursued him to the end of

his days, rendered his position in the English Church a barren prospect, and his subsequent position in the Romish Church one of singular embarrassment.

Manning was a man of action, not an accomplished theologian or a deep thinker on any subject, social, political, or spiritual. His instincts as an ecclesiastical statesman set him on to liberate the Church of England from its bondage to the civil power. He was at no time eager, like Newman, to purge it of its Protestantism. According to his contemporary diary, he confesses to have been led astray for a time from 1841 to 1846 by ambitions and secular desires; as Cardinal Manning, after the habit of unctuous self-satisfaction had grown upon him, he explains that he might have been at this time plunged into secularity, but owing to supernatural assistance escaped. However, to the outward world he was what Mr Purcell calls the judicious and venerable Archdeacon of Chichester, who had no sympathy with the well-known W. G. Ward of Oxford and his book. Ward returned the compliment with vigour: "When I hear men called judicious I suspect them, but when they are called judicious and venerable they are scoundrels." By coincidence—of course undesigned—Mr Purcell quotes that observation on the very page upon which he applies the incriminated epithets to his hero.

In July 1845 came another ultra-Protestant charge from Manning. It was hoped that he would grapple with Newman's arguments, but he never did,—theology was not his strong point. In August 1846, when he found so many had gone out with Newman, he wrote to Mr Gladstone that he had a fear, amounting to a belief, that

of infallibility." These revelations are contained in letters and diaries extending over more than ten years (vol. i. p. 462), those towards the end marked "under the seal." All the time his public utterances, and his statements up to the very last to his penitents, proclaimed his profound and unwavering belief to the contrary. His explanation is (p. 464) "that people are rising up all over the country and appealing to me to solve doubts and difficulties which, as you know, perplex my own mind. But if I leave their appeals unanswered, they will think that I am as they are." It is an abuse of terms to call this self-deception, it is deliberate deception of others with an avowed purpose. His confidants were his beloved curate Laprimaudaye and Robert Wilberforce. In 1844 he directed his diary to be burnt unopened; on becoming a Catholic he removed that restriction, but carefully expurgated it, reducing it by one-half. He to the last referred to his confidential letters of these years as authentic evidence of his real opinions, and in those letters—some of which were written in Rome in 1848—he emphatically states that the grounds on which he had striven to keep others in the Church of England were falsified, and that he had no right to exercise his influence to that effect. In fact he came back from Rome a convert to all intents and purposes, his belief in the English Church having broken down as early as 1846 (vol. i. p. 437).

Mr Purcell makes a lame and half-hearted attempt to excuse all this (vol. i. pp. 465, 466), but the story darkens as he proceeds. In 1848, after his return from Rome, where he had shed his Protestant if not his Anglican skin, Manning made this statement to Mr Glad-

stone, from whom all his doubts and difficulties had been most carefully concealed. Referring to his illness of the previous year, he said:—

"Dying men, or men within the shadow of death, as I was last year, have a clearer insight into things unseen of others,—a deeper knowledge of all that relates to divine faith. In such communion with death and the region beyond death I had an absolute assurance in heart and soul, solemn beyond expression, that the English Church—I am not speaking of the Establishment—is a living portion of the Church of Christ."

No fear of Mr Gladstone forgetting this: in 1895 he declared he could swear to it in a court of law. He drank it in with avidity, and in November 1850, when Manning's secession was imminent, he brought it to his recollection by letter as "the most awful experience a man can undergo—namely, that which comes to him on the brink of the other world," and appealed to him whether he had *really* unlearned those lessons. This awkward passage, which only states in an emphatic manner what his letters to his penitents and other contemporary documents are full of, was never dealt with. All that Manning could do was to dispute the accuracy of Mr Gladstone's memory, without offering any counter-statement, and to remark that a breach sooner or later must have risen between them.

In 1850 came the Gorham judgment of the Privy Council, which practically decided that English clergymen need not hold the doctrine of baptismal regeneration. That was a decision adverse to Manning's party in the Church; had it been the other way, the Evangelicals would have seceded, and joined the Dissenters. From

Manning's point of view it struck out an article of the Creed, and asserted afresh the Royal Supremacy in matters of faith, a doctrine which was as old as Henry VIII. No doubt it was a crushing blow, and even Mr Gladstone had exclaimed when he heard of it, "The Church of England is gone unless it releases itself by some authoritative act," though, as a Privy Councillor, he would not himself sign any declaration which might tend, however slightly, in that direction. Manning's view of the peril and the crisis was "that it is no less than the question whether the Church of England be a divine or human society, whether we are in or out of the faith and the Church which our Lord founded by His Apostles." Still he remained for months longer at his post. Mr Gladstone, still ignorant of the previous change in his mind, endeavoured to get an episcopal declaration, adverse to the Privy Council judgment, in order to satisfy him; but it seems pretty clear that there was a foregone conclusion in his mind. Mr Gladstone remained under the belief till January 1895 that the Gorham judgment alone or principally drove Manning from the English Church. When informed by Mr Purcell of the letters to Robert Wilberforce, he declared that up to the Gorham judgment, "in all our correspondence and conversations, during an intimacy which extended over many years, Manning never once led me to believe that he had doubts as to the position or divine authority of the English Church, far less that he had lost faith altogether in Anglicanism." Then comes an extraordinary circumstance, which ought, for the credit of Manning's memory, to be cleared up. Mr Gladstone's statement is that he regarded Manning's letters to him

as of the highest value and importance, that over a long period every subject of vital interest affecting the Church of England was discussed by him, that they were a striking record of every movement therein since Newman's secession, and contain no hint of his changing faith. All we know of those letters is that Mr Gladstone returned them to the writer, who destroyed them. Mr Purcell says (vol. i. p. 569) that, so far as could be ascertained, they were destroyed by the Cardinal not long before his death. In his preface he says that the Cardinal told him that, for various reasons, he did not think their publication would be expedient. Mr Gladstone, it is added, was very indignant on hearing of their fate, and exclaimed, "Had I dreamt that Manning would have destroyed them, I would never have returned them." But why this misplaced confidence. We know that Manning wanted his letters to his spiritual mother in Puritanism back because they would compromise him. When and under what circumstances and on what representations did he get back his letters to his Anglican friend, to whom, if he had stayed in the English Church, he would have looked for a mitre? Did he apply for them, and what reasons did he give for wanting them, or were they offered to him? Were they ever shown to the biographer? If the circumstances are at all favourable to Manning's candour, it is scarcely judicious to suppress them. According to Mr Gladstone, the correspondence, if forthcoming, would be fresh evidence of an insincerity which is abundantly proved from other sources. To judge from the defiant and challenging tone of Mr Gladstone's own letters about the date of the conversion, it would

seem that its suddenness, in direct contradiction of quite recent expressions of immovable conviction, "singularly deliberate, singularly solemn," produced at the time an unfavourable impression on his mind. Further than that, Mr Gladstone suspended all intercourse with him for twelve years, and yet for some wholly unexplained reason gave up a correspondence which he knew was of the utmost importance for clearing up the transaction.

The final step of secession was taken after the uproar which arose throughout the country at what was called the papal aggression—viz., the re-establishment of the Roman Catholic hierarchy in England by a papal bull, that response to the advances made by the Oxford Movement and Newman's secession. It is interesting to note what in the opinion of a Roman Catholic like Mr Purcell was the result of that re-establishment. He says it exorcised the spirit of Gallicanism amongst English Catholics—that is, the spirit of resistance to the undue domination of the Pope, of opposition to the ultramontane type of Catholicism. Rome forced upon Catholics in England the alternative of breaking with her or of violating their allegiance to the constitution of the realm by submitting to papal authority. Again, it was a challenge to the English people to listen to the Roman message. The old hereditary Catholics were not pleased by it. The new Oxford converts were Cardinal Wiseman's chief auxiliaries. They infused new life into the party. Newman took up his position in the Oratory at Birmingham, leading a more or less retired life; Manning, as the man of action and intrigue, established himself in London.

Manning at the date of his conversion was forty-four years of age. If he had to begin life again, it must be remembered that Rome offered to his "restless energies and brilliant abilities a larger field than the Church of England—larger hopes, larger aspirations, and if so be larger ambitions." There must have been an understanding between him and his new authorities. Within ten weeks of his being received into the Church, he received holy orders at the hands of Cardinal Wiseman, many persons objecting to the step as hasty and ill-advised. He was spared the indignity of being only a layman for any protracted period. And even before he began his new theological studies at Rome, Wiseman (vol. i. p. 638) was expressing a hope that he would soon become a bishop. "I look upon you," he said after ordination, "as one of the first-fruits of the restoration of the hierarchy by our Holy Father Pius IX. Go forth, my son, and bring your brethren and fellow-countrymen by thousands and tens of thousands into the one true fold of Christ."

Manning soon had his work cut out for him. Wiseman was sorely in need of priests, and wished to establish a community of secular priests in London after the pattern of similar Italian communities. He called it the Oblates of St Charles, Bayswater. Manning went to Italy to carry out Wiseman's design, to get the Pope's sanction, and generally to act as Wiseman's agent. These visits made him known to the chief official personages, the ruling Cardinals at Propaganda, and brought him into intimate relations with the Pope, to whom he had already become known in 1848. From 1851 to 1854 he was constantly in Rome, receiving from Pius IX.

fatherly kindness. It was the beginning, or at least a very early stage, of a confidence never broken till the Pope died in 1878.

In 1854 he began the work of a priest in Westminster—Wiseman doing all in his power to give full play to his zeal and ambition, Manning in his turn being most punctilious in showing due deference to his archbishop. In 1856 he appears to have taken in hand the founding of the Oblates, and became its Father Superior for eight years. In 1857 he was appointed by Pius IX. Provost of the Chapter of Westminster. This rapid rise let loose the waters of strife. The new convert was far too pushing a man to be popular, and a fine *casus belli* arose over Wiseman's ill-considered appointment of Dr Errington as his own coadjutor at Westminster, with right of succession to the archbishopric. This was the very post, the archbishopric, that Manning coveted, and strife grew fast and furious.

The "Errington case," which was fought out in England and at the Propaganda in Rome, nominally between Wiseman and his coadjutor, determined by its result Manning's position and prospects in the Romish Church. It symbolised and summed up all the disputes which were pending between Wiseman, the Chapter, and his suffragan bishops. Manning had at the Vatican a watchful friend and agent in the person of Monsignor Talbot, as he had in former days a friend at the side of the Bishop of Chichester, always ready to put in a good word for him and smooth down any difficulty which might arise. Talbot was chamberlain to the Pope, his intimate friend and constant companion. With Talbot's aid he soon managed to give the

whole business a sound party flavour, in which he figured as more Roman than Rome itself, resolved to put down the anti-Roman and anti-papal spirit of English Catholicism in the person of Dr Errington. The difficulty was that an archbishop can no more get rid of his coadjutor with right of succession than a man can rid himself of an uncomfortable wife. Errington held a see on his own account, but he could not be removed unless found guilty of a canonical offence. Wiseman could not seek to undermine him; even if disposed to try, he had not the requisite audacity and intrigue. Errington had a firm ally in the person of Monsignor Searle, and a fierce contest raged between Manning and Searle in the presence of Wiseman, prostrate from a surgical operation. The bishops were in general opposed to Manning. But the latter through his friend Talbot had the ear of the Pope, and filled the Vatican with his complaints of the difficulties encountered by the Church in England from malcontent bishops, insubordinate chapters, the Jesuits, Newman, and the low order of Catholicism which generally prevailed. Talbot, on his side, duly reported to Manning all that went on at Rome, and let him know whenever his presence was needed in Rome to forward his interests. It did not require much time and trouble, says Mr Purcell, on the part of a man of such infinite tact and skill as Manning to gain supreme influence over Talbot. If Talbot had the ear of the Pope, the tongue which spoke in whispers was not Talbot's. The extreme views put forward by Manning were those which were most prized at the Vatican. The Gallican independent spirit found

little favour there, neither did jealousy and prejudice against the converts. Manning undoubtedly held good cards, and he played them with great skill. Talbot agreed with him more and more that until the old generation of priests and bishops was removed no great progress of religion could be expected in England. Errington figured in this controversy as the head and front of a great anti-Roman and anti-papal conspiracy, whose removal at all costs and hazards was necessary to save the Church in England from disaster. Accordingly Manning drew up a memorial of charges against him, of conspiracy against his archbishop amounting to a "schism in the episcopate," and got himself appointed as Wiseman's procurator in Rome, where for several years he carried on the conflict. The Cardinals of Propaganda sought to get rid of the difficulty by making Errington Archbishop of the Port of Spain, Trinidad, but he would not accept it. It was impossible to prove a canonical offence against him. Yet Manning succeeded, by persistent intrigue and diplomacy, in ousting him in 1860 from his post of coadjutor, and not content with that, in 1862 got the Pope to command him to resign his right of succession to the see of Westminster. It was a marvellous success. Manning was almost single-handed in the fight. The English bishops, the Roman Cardinals, and, it may be added, the merits of the case (for Dr Errington was obviously the finer character of the two), were all against him. He succeeded by what Pius IX. called "*a coup d'état* of the Lord God." The voice which complained was the voice of Wiseman, but the hand which struck the blow was that of Manning. As competent observers remarked

at the time, if there had been no Manning there would have been no Errington case. It was a great victory, but the seeds of future fight were sown in Errington's unjust defeat. Dr Errington was held in the highest esteem by those who knew him, and regarded as a fitting successor to Cardinal Wiseman. The sympathies of the Chapter of Westminster and of the clergy of the diocese were with him. His removal was neither forgotten nor forgiven.

This was not the only dispute carried on at Rome which was due to Manning. The others are dealt with in detail by Mr Purcell. They dragged their slow length along before the tribunals of Propaganda, Talbot being throughout Manning's unflinching friend at the Vatican, but are of less interest than the severe conflict which raged over Dr Errington and his right of succession to the archbishopric of Westminster.

There is a curious little incident about this time, arising out of the events which were passing in Italy connected with Garibaldi and the revolution of that day. The temporal power of the Pope remained as the sole exception to a united Italy, and it was upheld till 1870 by the presence of a French force. Manning of course was a constant and undaunted champion of the Holy See, its temporal power, and all its privileges. He delivered sermons and lectures in its support. He exulted in the martyrdom of attack and abuse which rained in upon him, satisfied that at least in Rome, where all his hope of promotion lay, his championship was appreciated. In due course the lectures were translated into Italian and published at Rome. Unfortunately the line of argument pursued, particularly an un-

fortunate remark that Rome might become the city of Antichrist, was disapproved — the lectures were censured and even threatened with the Index. In this crisis Talbot's friendship was most serviceable. Talbot's zeal for his friend was only equalled by the friend's alacrity in correcting or suppressing any statements which might be deemed to be erroneous. They were written, he said, on the spur of the moment, in the heat of controversy, and he did not always give himself time to define his propositions with perfect accuracy. It is satisfactory to hear that after some slight amendments and alterations Manning's views were approved at Propaganda.

It is, however, round the succession to the Westminster See that the plot thickens. Wiseman was growing old. There was well-founded alarm that at his death the claims of Dr Errington would be revived. The canons of Westminster were hostile to Dr Manning as Provost, and still more to his being promoted; the bishops as well as the canons were in favour of Errington and against Manning. The latter knew that as long as Errington retained an English foothold the victory was not finally gained; it was only a truce, which would terminate with the death of Wiseman. Intrigue, skill, and diplomacy came into play, journeys to Rome, and audiences of the Pope. If only Errington could be induced to accept a foreign archbishopric, what a relief it would be! Or if Wiseman would appoint another coadjutor with right of succession and show a little more discretion this time in his selection, all would go well. But Errington refused, and Wiseman had had enough of coadjutors with rights of succession, and wished to end

his days in peace. That would be impossible if he appointed as one but Manning, while to give way and give him the appointment which he so earnestly desired would, as Mr Purcell observes, have raised "such a hubbub as to destroy all chance of living or dying in peace." Manning, however, was of opinion that the danger of Errington's succession, a man "of a loose order of English Catholicism, national and anti-Roman," was too imminent, and that the question must not be allowed to sleep. He urged action on Wiseman persistently, but the repugnance the Cardinal to reopen strife was insuperable. Accordingly Manning urged that the Pope should interfere, and take the appointment into his own hands. He was sure that the Cardinal would be relieved in his mind if the Holy See would decide for him, for his will was weakened through illness. All was in vain. The matter was left in Wiseman's hands. He died in 1865 and made no sign. After all, the question must be settled in England, and Manning got back from Rome just two days before the death, and so was on the spot when the succession opened up.

Talbot's first letter to him desired to be kept "*au courant* of all that is being done, and you may depend on my secrecy." The Irish, he said, are anxious that Dr Errington should succeed; the Holy Father and Cardinal Barnabé have set their minds on Dr Ullathorne; the Chapter of Westminster must be careful, otherwise the Holy Father will take the matter into his own hands. As a matter of fact, the first step taken by the Chapter was to elect not Provost Manning but Canon O'Neal to rule temporarily over the vacant see

and arrange for the obsequies of the deceased Cardinal. The wish of the Chapter and of every Catholic was that Newman should preach the funeral sermon. Somehow—no one knew how—the invitation miscarried, and the Chapter was informed that at Wiseman's express wish Manning was to perform that function. Then came the duty of the Chapter to present three names to the Pope, and for him to make a nomination. A friendly message from Rome deprecated the name of Errington, another from Propaganda intimated that there was full liberty of selection. The Chapter nominated Clifford, Bishop of Clifton, Errington, Archbishop of Trebizond, and Grant, Bishop of Southwark. Manning had not a chance. The English Government claimed a voice in the matter, and Lord Palmerston supported Grant. Propaganda took two months to investigate and decide. Meanwhile Manning and Talbot were very busy. A memorial went to Rome in favour of Errington. There was great indignation at this, and Talbot took advantage of it to suggest the name of Manning, but that was at once rejected as certain to be the occasion of dissension and schism. So the news was broken to Manning that there was no hope or chance for him. Manning on his part, of course, had never aimed at or desired it. Still all three names were bad alike, a grave affront, he considered, to the Holy See, a struggle to gain ascendancy over the Cardinal's work and name, and to justify their past insubordination. The Pope at first wished to appoint Talbot, but he was soon convinced that Talbot was too implicated in supporting Manning's candidature to be popular in England. Eventually, on the 30th April 1865,

apparently against the wish of the Chapter at Westminster, the bishops in England, and all the Council of Propaganda, Manning was by a Pontifical act made Archbishop of Westminster.

Talbot wrote to him as follows:—

"My policy throughout was never to propose you *directly* to the Pope, but to make others do so: so that both you and I can always say that it was not I who induced the Holy Father to name you, which would lessen the weight of your appointment. . . . I do not say that the Pope did not know that I thought you the only man eligible: as I took care to tell him over and over again what was against all the other candidates; and in consequence he was almost driven into naming you. After he had named you, the Holy Father said to me, 'What a diplomatist you are, to make what you wish come to pass!'"

Evidently Talbot's art had not reached the perfection of being concealed; Pius IX. knew he was being led on, but at the same time was a willing agent. Of course the tale of purely human adroitness is interlarded with pious observations on the intervention of a higher power and of supernatural agency, but we omit all that in mercy to our readers. Talbot advised that Manning should not under the circumstances urge the Pope to consecrate him. Manning announced to one of his distinguished spiritual children that the heavy burden had been laid upon him "not only without human influence," which with Talbot's letter in his pocket was a rash and extravagant assertion, "but in spite of manifold and powerful human opposition," which was literally true. He was consecrated by Bishops Ullathorne, Grant, and Clifford, Newman being present.

In his new position he laid him-

self out to please, and succeeded in winning golden opinions all round. He soon reported to Talbot the kindness of the bishops and the reconciliation of all the canons. Two of his rivals consecrated him: Archbishop Errington retired to Liverpool, where he worked under the Bishop as a parish priest, and died, after living in peace and silence, in 1885, respected by all, but without any attempt to tell his own story. Perhaps his biographer may one day supplement what we know, and give to the world the opinion formed of Manning and his ways by one at least of his opponents.

It is unnecessary to follow the description of Manning's ecclesiastical, literary, and political work as Archbishop. In fact, the volumes contain 1500 closely printed pages—not surprising when we consider the incessant activity of the man in spheres of the highest interest. He founded churches and missions, colleges and seminaries, elementary and industrial schools, reformatory and poor-law schools, homes and orphanages. He kept his reverend and very reverend secretaries on their stools from morning to night, without pity or remorse. A more despotic and restless chief it was impossible for subordinates to desire, however gluttonous they might be for work. And his manner does not seem to have been very charming except to those whom he wanted to conciliate. There are complaints on the part of devoted friends of what was called his "Protestant hardness." It is recorded that his friend and successor, Archbishop Vaughan, when travelling in the same railway-carriage with him, found the position unbearable—that is, he got out of it, saying he "could not stand him any longer."

The culminating point in Man-

ning's life was his membership of the Vatican Council, the first great Ecumenical Council since that of Trent. As we read Mr Purcell's animated account of the proceedings, we are reminded of the intrigues and disputes which are so vividly described in Froude's recent book. Manning played, as might be expected, a foremost part in it, of which he was duly conscious. It never occurred to him, says his biographer, that he "was merely a unit in an assemblage so vast. It would seem to him rather as if the Vatican Council were personified in himself: as if his were the supreme vote which defined the dogma of papal infallibility." The subject was one which he had made his own, the establishment of the principle of absolute papal authority, capable of swift exercise, freed from the cumbrous machinery of a General Council, as essential in the interests of disorganised society. Manning was in his element, a statesman amongst representative fathers of the Church. Dr Newman, it is easy to understand, was not there. He would have been elected by the English bishops, but they were informed that he would be specially invited by the Pope. After the election was over the invitation was not forthcoming: and Dr Newman declined to go as a French bishop's theologian. When the Council met, Manning's restless energy and persuasive powers were the admiration of all. Some of the older cardinals of the Council on either side looked askance at his novel method of canvassing for votes, and deprecated what they called his "perpetual intriguing." The outside criticism was, "There was no better hand than Manning's in drawing the long-bow." Intrigues within the Council did not

exhaust the exigencies of the situation. If the Powers of Europe had taken common action against the Pope and the Council, that would have been an irresistible accession of strength to his opponents. Mr Gladstone was Prime Minister, and he was bitterly hostile to the whole proceeding. But through Manning's machinations he was defeated in his own Cabinet, when he advocated the acceptance of a Bavarian proposal that England should invite the intervention of the Powers of Europe. Lord Clarendon, primed by reports from Mr Odo Russell, who was in close alliance with Manning in Rome, carried his point. If the Council had then been prorogued, it would never have reassembled; for shortly afterwards the Franco-German war broke out, Rome was seized, the Catholics in Germany were under persecution, and the Pope was a prisoner in the Vatican.

The decree of infallibility was not carried without a tremendous conflict. The majority of German, Austrian, Hungarian, and French bishops, with Newman on their side, were against it. The Italian and South American bishops were in its favour. In the result the opposition bishops dissolved their union and dispersed. On the 18th July 1870, 533 votes were recorded in its favour and only 2 against it. On the next day, if Mr Purcell is right in his dates, war was declared between France and Germany, and the Vatican Council stood prorogued. The result on Manning's personal position was marked. He was the foremost man at Rome, recognised by all as the undaunted and successful champion of the new dogma. In recognition of his services the dignity of the Cardinalate was conferred upon him in 1875. The Pope had proposed his name

earlier, but the Cardinals had then declined to elect him.

From that time his intimate connection with Rome ceased. Pius IX. died in 1878, and in him the Cardinal lost a steadfast friend and patron. Ever since Archdeacon Manning, in 1848, knelt down in the Piazza di Spagna as the papal carriage approached, the Pope had not lost sight of him, and at one time the intimacy was such that it might almost be said that Manning carried in his pocket a latch-key to the Vatican. Manning was with him at his death on the 7th February. On the 18th the Conclave of Cardinals elected his successor. Several Cardinals were successively proposed, each in turn receiving the proposal with *nolo episcopari* modesty. At last it was said to be necessary that the next Pope should be a foreigner, and Manning's name was suggested, and the chair was, according to his note of that date, pressed upon his acceptance. But he modestly deprecated the suggestion, saying that the next Pope should be Italian in blood and speech. The Italians took him at his word, and Leo XIII. ascended the throne of St Peter. At a later date Bishop Wilberforce's diary imputed to him abject servility in lying prostrate at the Pope's feet and refusing to rise, and with undue adulation. Manning left a note of vindication behind him, and refuted "such base mendacities as Samuel Wilberforce wrote and his son has published." It is odd to find these distinguished ecclesiastics indulging in this posthumous railing.

There was no love lost between the two brothers-in-law, Archbishop Manning and Bishop Wilberforce. Nor was Manning fortunate in his personal relations and in the mode in which he dis-

charged the obligations of friendship. He owed, for instance, to Talbot no ordinary gratitude. In the league offensive and defensive between them Talbot had fulfilled his part of the bargain with the utmost zeal. Talbot, on his part, was very interested in building a church of St Thomas's at Rome. He looked to Manning to get subscriptions, and it was cold comfort to him to find that his friend was "burdened beyond measure," and that the process of extracting thousands of pounds from the Catholic laity, already overburdened with claims at home, somewhat lagged. Talbot retreated into an asylum in 1868, his mind having given way. The final letters between them, dated in that year, were rather strained. Though he had lucid intervals, he never fully recovered his reason. "In all Manning's diaries, journals, and reminiscences there is no record of Talbot's illness and death. His name disappears, sinks out of sight, as a stone cast into the waters." The memory of a devoted friend, however long the record of his devoted services, seems to be only one degree less irksome than a wife's.

The estrangement which undoubtedly existed between him and Newman receives careful attention from his biographer. Apparently Newman was regarded in some quarters as a disloyal and worldly Catholic. A Spanish friend of the Archbishop went so far as to say that his conversion was the greatest calamity which had befallen the Catholic Church. Not so, was the famous retort; "the greatest calamity to the Church in our day was the death of a woman" (Mrs Manning). Newman had already resented Manning's double-dealing in his Anglican days. In 1867 Man-

ning sought through a friend an explanation of the continued estrangement. The answer was, "The difficulty I have in implicitly confiding in him." In a letter to the Archbishop, he described it as "a distressing mistrust, my own share of a general feeling (though men are slow to express it, especially to your immediate friends) that you are difficult to understand. . . . Your words, your bearing, and your implications ought, though they have not served to prepare me for your acts." Manning simply retorted that the mistrust was mutual. They never wrote or spoke again in terms of intimacy. Newman's orthodoxy was severely called in question, nowhere more than in the 'Dublin Review,' for which attacks Manning was responsible. Complaints against him were made at the Vatican. For years Newman did not know who were his accusers and what he was accused of. All this time Manning professed his friendship. Mr Parcell compares this with his profession of unchanged friendship for Mr Gladstone, including the whole of the twelve years during which they never met; to which Mr Gladstone had retorted, that in this unchanged friendship Manning had made against him "insidious and painful charges, that he had suppressed his opinion on the Vatican Council, until he had no longer the Roman Catholic vote to lose." Many Catholics strongly sided with Newman, and presented him with an address of confidence. Talbot regarded this as an offensive production. "What is the province of the laity? To hunt, to shoot, to entertain. These matters they understand, but to meddle with ecclesiastical affairs they have no right at all, and this affair of Newman is a matter purely ecclesi-

astical." The opposition to Newman at Rome, which was all through fostered by Manning, was based on his alleged disloyalty to the Pope, and his worldliness. His 'Apologia' itself was derided as minimising Catholic doctrine, and as tending to make Anglicans remain where they are. Besides, Newman mentioned all his intimate friends by name in his 'Apologia,' and from that list excluded Manning. The estrangement was deep-seated, and never removed. In a letter in 1869, Newman closed all further attempts at explanation by this short letter:—

"MY DEAR ARCHBISHOP,—I can only repeat what I said when you last heard from me. I do not know whether I am on my head or my heels when I have active relations with you. In spite of my friendly feelings, that is the judgment of my intellect."

For years after that the two men never wrote and never met, and as there were no more letters to Talbot, there is no record of Manning's sentiments further than this, "His last was in terms which made a reply hardly fitting on my part"; though in 1887 he reviewed in an autobiographical note his variance with his friend, saying, "If I have been opposed to him, it has only been that I must oppose either him or the Holy See."

When Pius IX. died the scene was changed. It was not easy to explain to Leo XIII. why "the most illustrious Catholic of our generation," as Mr Purcell calls him, had been so ostentatiously neglected. The Duke of Norfolk and the Marquis of Ripon sought an interview with Cardinal Manning, and expressed the desire of the Catholic laity of England that Newman should be made a Cardinal. Manning on hearing this

bent his head in silence. Recovering himself, he offered to embody their views in a letter of his own. He did so, and the Duke of Norfolk explained to the new Pope in an audience the strange way in which Newman had been neglected and mistrusted. The Pope acceded to the request, and the offer was duly made. Dr Newman wrote to Cardinal Nina accepting it, though of course he alluded to his disqualifications and so forth in all that *nolo episcopari* modesty which etiquette prescribes and even folly understands. In his letter to Manning he said he could not be so ungracious as to decline. Manning put on his letters the construction that he declined it. A statement appeared in the 'Times,' and afterwards in all the other papers, to the effect that he had done so; and Manning went to Rome, the bearer of his letter. Newman fully understood the position, and wrote to the Duke of Norfolk to point out that a private letter addressed to Roman authorities had been interpreted on its way and published, and that the statement could only have come from some one in a position so to act. The Duke accordingly had to request the Cardinal to explain to the Pope that the affair had been made public in a way no one was able to account for, and to prevent the published interpretation from being accepted as correct. Manning had to explain to Cardinal Nina why his interpretation of it differed from that of Newman. The explanation was drily accepted, with the remark that the writer was the best interpreter of his own meaning. The Cardinal's hat was given and accepted. Newman was immensely gratified. The act of the Pope was the stamp of Leo's official approbation.

anthropy and Church administration were his only spheres. The laity supported him with munificence.

"To the poor of his own flock, to the distressed, to the mass of the working class, the death of Cardinal Manning was almost a personal loss. To the hearts of multitudes it seemed as if they had lost in him a friend, a father. His sympathy with distress, suffering, oppression, had drawn to him during the later years of his life the hearts of the working people of London. They looked up to him as a friend, as a counsellor."

And to Mr Purcell's partisan eye it seemed as if the whole country was as much moved at the death of the two Cardinals, Wiseman and Manning, the first since the Reformation, as at that of the Duke of Wellington, and paid the same honours to them at their deaths. It may readily be accepted that, when once he had gained his pre-eminent position, Cardinal Manning filled it with dignity and used it for all high and worthy purposes. He gained all, perhaps more than all, that the weird sisters had promised, and if in playing for it he did not act strictly according to

the rules of the ring, it must be remembered that these high-reaching and ardent natures are not always easily intelligible. At the close of the book one's feeling is, that in spite of manifold errors, faults which go down to the very root of character, annul a man's truthfulness, and all that can render him worthy of trust to his fellow-men, one is nevertheless anxious, for the sake of fairness, to grasp what was after all his title to the respect and ascendancy which he manifestly enjoyed. It must consist in this, that during a long life, in the whole of that part of it which was not devoted to intrigue and self-advancement, he did as a rule sincerely strive to discharge the duties incident to his high position with energy and success. His great ability and his indomitable energy were no doubt regarded at the time of his conversion as a great loss to the Church of England, though his secession was far less injurious than that of Newman. But on a review of his whole life it is a loss which may be borne with equanimity, and the Roman Catholic Church itself may hesitate to triumph too loudly over its acquisition.

SOME EPISODES IN A LONG LIFE.

THE retrospect of a long life, which portrays in colouring vivid as of old the varied scenes of an unforgetten past, seems to have a strange and pathetic analogy with that first glimpse of the unknown realms which await the traveller when the bourn is past whence there is no return,—for the land of memory is peopled only with the forms of those who have passed to the Elysian fields, and whose aspect, unchanged and distinct in lifelike remembrance, has no longer a place on these mortal shores. Yet so many fair and gracious shapes come smiling back to me from the dead world of my youth, that it seems well to give substance, at least in words, to those fleeting pictures before the recollections, that few can share at all, shall have faded in presence of a sterner reality.

Before I begin to speak of many whose names still wake the undying echoes of our time, it may be interesting, in these days of higher education and culture, to reproduce for aspiring students a vision of the little French school which forms one of my earliest recollections, and testifies to the range of learning then considered suitable for both sexes alike.

In order to give their children the best education possible, my parents had come to live for a time in France, where I had been born just six years before, in the "bonne ville d'Aix" in Provence. We remained for a time in Paris before I went to school, and two very clear visions come back to me from our sojourn there. First, I remember standing on the balcony outside our drawing-room, looking down on the crowded

street, where a huge lumbering State coach drawn by six horses was slowly making its way, preceded and followed by mounted soldiers, and from its wide window there looked out the heavy downcast face of an elderly man who was then still the reigning King of France—Charles Dix—but over whom the clouds were already gathering that sent him soon after as an exile and discredited monarch to the kindly shelter of Holyrood Palace. Secondly, I recall a very different scene in the drawing-room within, my elder sister receiving a music-lesson from a wild-looking young man with long black hair falling round his thin pale face, and dark eyes flashing with passionate excitement over the halting chords with which his much-alarmed pupil aroused his ire: sometimes, in patiently telling her to give her place at the piano, he would fling himself into it, and execute a sonata with all the wonderful talent which afterwards made him celebrated as the great musician Liszt.

Finally we migrated to Versailles, and it was there I was sent to a French day-school—solemnly conducted to it occasionally by an old Scottish butler, who boasted that he had quickly acquired the language of the country, and who invariably accosted me, when I came home from school with my organised headgear, in what was considered to be his best French: "A bonny like chippe you have made for yourself now, Mamse F.!" The educational establishment to which I was relegated was supposed to be of the highest class, and to receive none but the ch

dren of gentlemen, yet the arrangements would not be tolerated in a parish school at the present day. Boys and girls alike were massed together in one not very large schoolroom, wooden benches without any support on which to lean back were provided for us, and there we were placed, a boy and a girl alternately, with the utmost regularity through the whole assemblage. I believe I was the only representative of Great Britain, the other pupils being chiefly French, with just a sprinkling of Spaniards and Italians. I sat in the front row as one of the youngest; and facing us was a raised dais, on which, in a magisterial-looking chair, sat our sole instructress, Mademoiselle Henriette. A very vivacious elderly French lady she was, coming down sharply upon us for any breach of politeness or good manners; but I am unable to recall any one item of even the most rudimentary learning which I acquired at her hands. I could already read and write; but the varied list of attainments supposed to be taught in the school—geography, arithmetic, &c.—seem never to have come my way at all. Of this I have a conclusive proof in the fact that when I went home in the evening our English governess demanded of me a report of the day's studies, and placed on the table before me a fascinating row of *bonbons*, one or more of which was to reward any tangible increase of knowledge I might have attained. It is distressingly significant of the manner in which children were taught in that distinguished academy, that not one of these *bonbons* has ever been gained by me up to the present date. It must be owned, however, that this primitive school was instrumental in conveying to the foreign pupils a familiarity with the

French language which could not have been acquired by years of systematic study.

Much later in life I had the opportunity of seeing in Paris various notable Frenchmen who interested me greatly. The most distinguished of these, both by his saintly character and the tragedy of his fate, was Monseigneur Darboy, the Archbishop of Paris, who was done to death on the 24th of May 1871 by the Communists, then in the last days of their sanguinary power, and therefore the more bent on consummating the destruction of the most important and unoffending of their many victims. I had seen the Archbishop two years before the date of his cruel murder, under circumstances which, in contrast with that event, afforded a most emphatic commentary on the *sic transit gloria mundi*, as he had then been surrounded not only with all the pomp due to his high ecclesiastical position, but with every adjunct of the magnificence which was so carefully cultivated at the Court of the Second Empire. It was in the chapel of the Tuileries, a year before the Franco-Prussian war broke out, that I saw Monseigneur Darboy officiating at High Mass in the presence of the Emperor and Empress and the young Prince Imperial. My brother-in-law, with whom I was staying, being the Greek ambassador, had been able to get me a card of admission to a seat immediately in front of the altar, and close to those occupied by the Imperial party. It was interesting, of course, to be able at such close quarters to scrutinise the somewhat sombre countenance of Napoleon III., the delicate features of his beautiful wife, and the fair face of the boy on whom so many glowing hopes were fixed—

all doomed to be quenched in the dust of death at one desolate spot in far-off Zululand. But it was the venerable Archbishop who attracted my attention most strongly, from the subdued gentleness and humility of his aspect, in spite of the gorgeousness of his vestments, rich in crimson velvet, gold embroidery, and priceless lace. He wore a little red skull-cap over his soft white hair, and the expression of his mild countenance was that of simple genuine goodness. His complete absorption in the religious service on which he was engaged was quite in accordance with what I had been told of his pure devoted life; and the appearance of the meek defenceless old man would have led one to believe that he was one of the last persons who could ever become the object of implacable hatred and brutal violence. Yet two years later I stood on the spot where that gentle spirit had at last escaped by the tardy mercy of death from an agony of persecution and torture little known, I believe, beyond the prison walls where the last cruel scene was enacted.

An application to the Minister of the Interior had procured for me the privilege of going over the whole of the prison of La Roquette, where the Archbishop spent the last days of his life and met his cruel fate. The transformation scenes which often appear in the history of nations, could hardly have been more strikingly exemplified than by the change which had passed over France in the short interval that had elapsed since my first meeting with Monseigneur Darboy. The chapel of the Tuileries with all its costly ornaments had dissolved into a heap of ashes, burnt to the ground on that day when the message was flashed to us over the water that

"Paris was in flames." The Emperor, not having been able, as he said, to die at Sedan, was a throneless exile on our shores, and his son, heir only to broken hopes was being educated in obscurity for the military career, which was to terminate his young life without his ever having attained the honours of war.

It is probably well remembered as a matter of history that the Archbishop, with the President of the Cours de Cassation and four priests, among whom was the *archevêque* of the Madeleine, had been seized by the authorities of this terrible time and confined in the prison of Mazas as so-called hostages—in the hope, doubtless, that regard for their safety might retard the approach of the army from Versailles which was to rescue Paris from truly merciless hands. On the 22d of May, however, it became known to the leading Communists that Thiers had resolved on immediate action, and that his troops were about to advance on the hapless city without further delay. Then they resolved to proceed at once to the execution of the Archbishop and the other hostages, intoxicated as they seemed to be with the thirst for destruction and cruelty which had characterised the whole of their short-lived reign over the maddened populace. They had succeeded in thoroughly inflaming the passions of the people against Monseigneur Darboy by the utterly false accusation that during the siege he had concealed enormous stores of provisions, while he left the inhabitants of the beleaguered city to hopeless starvation. This senseless calumny against a benevolent and tender-hearted old man was eagerly believed by the red Republicans, in whose eyes it was a crime in any one to occupy a high

position; and during the whole of his progress in an open waggon from the prison of Mazas to the *Dépôt des condamnés* where he was to die, he was surrounded by a yelling crowd, who hurled curses and insults upon him without moving him from the resigned composure with which he looked down on those over whom he had ever watched with a father's tenderness. His execution was delayed for two nights by the Director of La Roquette, on the plea of informality in the warrant, and I was shown the small dark cell occupied by the Archbishop during that dreary interval. It contained nothing but a coarse wooden bedstead covered with a sack of straw. No food was provided for him, and when at sunset on the 24th the Director had to obey a fierce order for his immediate execution, the feeble old man had to be supported down the stairs by one of those who were to die with him. The firing-party, commanded by Ferry and Lolive, and accompanied by a crowd of men, and women of the *petroleuse* stamp, were waiting for him in an open space within the high wall surrounding the prison, and the call upon him to stand forth and die was given in the scoffing terms which conveyed a final insult on the religion he held so dear—"Georges Darboy se disant serviteur d'un nommé Dieu." He raised his right hand to give a last blessing to the people round him; and as he did so the Communist Lolive, though not one of the appointed executioners, exclaimed, "That is your benediction, is it? then here is mine!" and he pointed his revolver at the old man's heart with an accurate aim. The volley from the firing-party followed, twice repeated, and the deadly act was fully consummated which remains as the darkest stain

on the history of the Commune of 1871. These details were not, I believe, generally known. The painful subject was naturally avoided by the people of Paris when they woke from their brief madness; but they were given to me privately by one of the principal officers of La Roquette, who seemed to feel keenly the disgrace this crime brought upon France.

During my stay in Paris at that time I witnessed a rather remarkable appearance of a man whom I think it is legitimate to mention without virtually departing from the rule of naming only those who have gone from this world, because he has succeeded in altering his personality so completely since then, that it is scarcely possible to connect him now at all with his earlier existence. The occasion was one when the church of the Madeleine was filled from end to end with an immense throng drawn within its walls by the announcement that Père Hyacinthe, celebrated for his eloquence, was to speak on behalf of the sufferers from the terrible earthquakes which had just taken place in Mexico. I had gone early enough to secure a place near the pulpit; but long before the time appointed there was not even standing room for the men who crowded into every available space, while some ladies sat on the floor, not a chair being left unoccupied. Every class seemed to be represented in the audience, peasants and members of religious orders side by side with the most fastidious members of *la haute aristocratie*. When the short preliminary service was over there was a sudden dead silence, all whispering voices ceased entirely, as a monk was seen to rise up in the pulpit, clad in a robe of brown serge, surmounted by the white woollen habit of the severe Carmelite order

to which he belonged. He had marked clear-cut features, with a fringe of dark hair beneath his tonsure, and, drawing himself up to his full height, he looked round with a free bold glance on the vast assemblage, instead of maintaining, according to rule, what is termed in monastic phraseology the "custody of the eyes" by keeping them fixed on the ground. Then in a loud sonorous voice he plunged into a sermon so totally opposed to all that would be considered orthodox in the Roman Church, that it caused an extraordinary sensation in the ecclesiastical world of Paris. Eloquent it was undoubtedly, but very unsatisfactory, in so far as it was supposed to be a means of instruction to the people. Speaking of the numbers of persons, including children, who had been swallowed up in the Mexican earthquakes, he said he might be asked to explain why they had suffered a frightful death, while multitudes in the frivolous world of Paris and elsewhere remained safe and unharmed in their homes. And this was his answer: sending a keen glance at the countless faces upturned to him, he folded his arms and said quietly, "*Mes frères, je n'en sais rien.*"

It was Père Hyacinthe's last appearance at the Madeleine, and his last public utterance in the garb of a monk anywhere.

Walking through the streets of Paris one day at that time, I met a little open phaeton, driving slowly of necessity through the crowded boulevard, in which a man sat alone, who seemed to attract the eager notice of every one he passed. His appearance was certainly very striking. He sat forward on the seat of the carriage, which was heaped up with papers, and from these every moment he snatched up a handful which he examined

with the most searching scrutiny, bending his strongly marked countenance and piercing black eyes closely over them, and then he would fling them down at his feet and take up others to be dealt with in the same way. He seemed full of energy and excitement, his long hair streamed out wildly from under a hat thrust at the back of his head, and his coat unbuttoned flew open on either side of him. "Gambetta! Gambetta!" called out the people as he passed—"le voilà notre homme!" Even this passing sight of Gambetta was peculiar enough to have stamped his individuality on my memory; but I had soon after the opportunity of witnessing a dramatic presentment of him, in both his social and political capacities, which was so remarkably clever and exact as a picture of the man, that I was assured I could not have known him better had I seen his very self going through the scenes in which his actual words and actions were systematically reproduced. Under the pseudonym of Rabagas, the author of the play had not hesitated to represent him precisely as he was really known, not only to his political associates but to those with whom he had the most intimate relations, and the actor who personified him had succeeded in rendering himself not only in dress and manner but even in countenance and expression an *actus fucsimile* of the best known character actor of the day. The intense interest with which the Parisian crowds who were present at this cunningly executed drama watched every detail, and the conflicting signs of approval or fiery indignation which the words of the mock Gambetta called forth, had a peculiar significance in view of the events that were to overtake him in the future.

I was struck by the absolut



indifference with which the appearance of another man was met in Paris, though his name has acquired a European notoriety, compared with the strong excitement which a sight of Gambetta aroused even when he was only passing in the street. Soon after my encounter with Gambetta I saw one day a meek-looking elderly man walking very quietly and unobtrusively along the Boulevard, his head bent, his eyes fixed on the ground as if in deep thought. He did not even respond to the only greeting which I saw offered to him by a passing gentleman. But I think the scanty notice which Ernest Renan attracted among his countrymen may be attributed to the fact, that the insidious poison filtering through his writings took infinitely less effect on the volatile French temperament than on the earnest thinkers of other countries, who possess what is called in the present day the Teutonic mind.

In passing through London during my earlier journeys, my parents invariably took me to stay with Mr and Mrs Lockhart, the daughter and son-in-law of Sir Walter Scott. They were our most intimate friends, and their children had been my companions from infancy : all three were living at that time, —the delicate eldest boy, whose premature departure from this world was not anticipated then ; while still less could his parents have dreamt that Walter, their second son, would so soon follow his brother to the grave : he was a tall, handsome lad, strong and healthy, with fair hair curling over his well-shaped head, and a frank, joyous expression, always merry, full of life and animation, and enthusiastically fond of his only sister, who was my special intimate. Charlotte Lockhart was one of the loveliest and most at-

tractive persons possible. She inherited the amiable, gentle disposition of her mother, Sir Walter's "dear Sophia," and, like her, was tenderly devoted and affectionate in all the relations of life. She sang charmingly, as she had a sweet melodious voice, not strong, but with a certain pathetic tone which was infinitely touching. Neither she nor I were at that time old enough to be introduced, so to speak, to society, but Mrs Lockhart was so kind to me that she allowed me to share in the late dinners, when there were generally guests invited to meet my father, literary men or artists, with whom he had much in common ; and Charlotte used to tell me on our arrival, with the greatest glee, that she was going to share with me in the honour and glory of being present at a "grown-up" dinner. My recollection of the whole household is one of singular brightness and charm, and it contrasts mournfully with the last visit I ever paid to Mr Lockhart. It was many years later, when we were living at Oxford. Mrs Lockhart and her two sons had all been taken from him, and Charlotte his only daughter was married to Mr Hope Scott, and entirely separated from him in her distant home. I was going to spend a few days in London, and as my father could not leave home he charged me to go, as his representative, to see Mr Lockhart, whom he had not met since before we went to Greece, and thus a long period had elapsed without any renewal of the close friendly intercourse they had formerly enjoyed together. I believe that Mr Lockhart scarcely received any visitors at that time, but when my name was announced to him he admitted me instantly. He was sitting alone in a rather dark room ; his countenance, still marked by the evidence

tion he lavished on his delicate boy Johnnie, who was never out of his arms when he had a moment to spare for him, I cannot but believe that this loving gentleness was really his true nature, hid for a time behind a mask of harder and more repellent qualities.

I never saw Mr Lockhart again, and the other members of Sir Walter Scott's family, with whom we had been most intimate, had all passed away at an earlier date. I remember his unmarried daughter Anne especially well; she often stayed in our house for long visits, and she used to employ me in looking out the consecutive pages of the proofs she read for her father. She had dark hair and eyes, and a pleasant animated countenance; but she was of a very nervous temperament, and extremely excitable. I well remember her great restlessness,—how she would pace up and down our drawing-room talking rapidly, and seeming dissatisfied. I, of course, knew not why. I think she was often a great perplexity to her father, who was always perfectly calm and equable under the most adverse circumstances. Looking back on Anne Scott now, as I recollect her, I think she must have suffered from hysteria, although the name had not then been given to that peculiar physiological state which has power to simulate every form of disease. I only remember her eldest brother Walter as a tall handsome officer, very frank and pleasant in manner, who used to appear wearing a uniform I thought very grand with its gold epaulettes and clanking sword. Walter was a fine good-natured young man, but wholly without literary tastes or any special mental advantages. That was reserved for his younger brother Charles, who was undoubtedly the most talented member of Sir Walter's family. He had en-

tered the diplomatic service, and was sent to Persia, where he died almost suddenly, and with him passed away the last of that goodly family, who had all borne the reflected lustre of their father's name. Of their mother, Lady Scott, I only remember seeing her, a pretty little old lady, sitting on the sofa beside my mother after dinner, and requiring to have her shoes taken off and her feet rubbed, as she was suffering from what I since know to have been dropsy; but as she died on my sixth birthday, my recollections of her are necessarily very scanty.

Before I close this brief record of Sir Walter Scott's family, I should like to mention the peculiar circumstances under which I was told that he had on a last memorable occasion been present in our house. My father, who had loved him more than any of the friends his own kindly nature and sweet temper had won for himself, was living in his ninetieth year at Frewen Hall, Oxford, a place wholly disconnected with any of his early associations; and the death of Sir Walter Scott—one of the greatest griefs of his life—had taken place thirty years before. He was still well and strong in spite of his great age, and had the full use of his faculties, with the exception of his memory, which failed him somewhat, but only with regard to recent events, while he clearly remembered the days of his youth. One afternoon in the dark month of November, when he seemed quite well and peaceful, I had left him alone for a few minutes sitting beside the fire in his own room; his servant was within call had he required him, but there was no one actually present with him. When I went back to him, not having been more than a quarter of an hour absent, I found him with a look of radiant happiness

upon his fine old face. "Oh, come quick!" he exclaimed. "I want to tell you of such a delightful surprise I have just had! Scott has been here! dear Scott! He told me he had come from a great distance to pay me a visit, and he has been sitting here with me talking of all our old happy days together. He said it was long since we had met; but he is not in the least changed: his face was just as cheerful and pleasant as it used to be; I have so enjoyed being with him." He went on for some time describing the charming visit his dear old friend had paid him, with a minuteness of detail which was rather startling, and then he asked me if I had not met Sir Walter coming out of his room. I told him I had not; but I said no word to suggest that there was any unreality in what he had seen. How could I tell what it had been? or how could any one express an opinion on such an event? I only know it was a last ray of brightness from the setting sun of my father's life. Very speedily after it had thus gleamed upon him he followed his dear friend to the unknown land, passing away gently and serenely as a child falling asleep in its mother's arms.

The picture of beautiful old age which the remembrance of my father brings before me, recalls to me also very vividly another venerable man, whose pure simple character seemed greatly to resemble his, though his tragic history was strangely different in every respect. It was in Greece that I knew him well as the Egooumenos (abbot) of a monastery hid away among the hills "that look on Marathon." I had come to the quaint old building where he dwelt with his monks, very late one evening, after having been fourteen hours on horseback. My father and I, with my Greek

brother-in-law, had been travelling in the interior of the country, and we had lost our way, and only succeeded in arriving long after sunset at the isolated monastery. It was our sole hope of shelter for the night, and we were all—myself especially—completely exhausted by the long day's ride. The moment our cavalcade arrived at the monastic door it was opened wide, and the Egooumenos came out to greet us, followed by several of his monks. Such a gentle, amiable-looking old man he was, with the clear-cut features of his race, and the dignified dress believed by members of the Greek Church to be the same as that worn by the apostles, and never certainly, having been altered within any period known to history,—the simple black robe with its wide sleeves, and the high cap of the same hue resting on his flowing white hair. Laying his hand on his heart and lips in the graceful Eastern salutation, he came towards us with the utmost cordiality. My brother-in-law explained to him that we had wandered from our rightful path, and had come to beg his hospitality for the night. "By all means," said the kind old man: he would be delighted to receive M. Ragabé, whose name he knew well, and my father and our servant (all Greeks), and our horses—he had very good stabling; but the lady—alas! no: that was impossible; she belonged to the dangerous class which was never allowed to pass the threshold of the monastery. What was to be done? I could not be left to pass the night in the wood; and even if my father had remained with me, my position would not have been much improved. Then I drew my horse close to the old man and addressed him with all the reverential Greek titles due to

his ecclesiastical rank. I told him I was so tired that if he did not allow me a shelter I should drop to the ground and be found there dead in the morning. I said I would sleep in any outside shed if he liked, only in the name of charity he must not send me from his door. He looked quite tenderly at me while he mused for a few minutes. Then he said he had thought of an expedient. His own sleeping-room was situated quite apart from the dormitories of the monks, and he would give it up to me. My father and brother should occupy two of their cells in the body of the house, and none of them would even see me or know that I was there. So it was settled. He took me quickly away to his private abode, and having commended me to the Kyrios Christos, he left me alone for my night's rest. There was nothing in the room but a sacred icon on the wall, a small table under the window (on which stood a classical-shaped vase filled with cold water), and the bed. It consisted of a long wooden board, on which was laid a piece of carpet; another slip of the same was to be used as a counterpane, and there was a stiff narrow pillow at the head. Without doubt, it was the hardest bed I ever lay on in my life, excepting when I fell asleep on the deck of the cutter in which I visited the Greek islands; but I was at the age when slumber comes easily, and I only woke when I saw through the barred window the glowing Greek sunrise lighting up the lovely hills around. I had been up and dressed some time when there was a little knock at the door. I opened it at once, and there was the Egoumenos smiling upon me with the sweet expression which was his special characteristic. He spoke some gentle words of blessing, and then said, "For-

give me, my child, for disturbing you; but there is a little matter here which I require." He went towards the bed, and, lifting the pillow, he took from under it a leathern bag, from which there came the sound of coins shaken together as he held it up before me. "There," he said, "in this little sack is all the money the monastery possesses—not a drachme have we anywhere else!" "So you let your whole fortune lie under my head all night!" I exclaimed; "were you not afraid I might steal it, and ride away with it?" "Ah no," he answered, with his gentle smile; "you are an Inglesa, and the travellers from that country do not steal or cheat. They are good Christianos." I said I was glad he thought so well of my compatriots, and then I thanked him very warmly for his kindness in giving up his room to me. He brought me some black coffee, without sugar or milk, and some brown bread, for my breakfast, and then we remounted and rode away.

I never saw the kind old man again; but he had a sad fate, which brought a most cruel ending to his blameless life. Not many years after we had enjoyed his courteous hospitality, the Egoumenos rode out alone one day upon his mule, with the intention probably of going to a distant olive-grove to procure some of that fruit for the ascetic diet of his monks. Brigandage was then rife through the country, as it still was at a later period not yet forgotten in our own land, when three well-known Englishmen fell victims to the vindictive fury of these savage klepts. The Egoumenos did not fear them. He considered that the well-known poverty of the monks would exempt them from any attack. He was sadly mistaken. A number of the brigands were lurking in ambush on his

path. Suddenly they rushed upon him, and at once overpowered him; for his feeble old age rendered any resistance impossible, and he did not attempt it. They conveyed him and his mule to the cave they inhabited in a very wild and desolate part of the hills. They did not injure him then, but told him grimly that the superior of a monastery was so important a person that a high price must be set on his head. That evening the monks waited in vain for their beloved Egoumenos. He did not return; and all night long they wandered about in the vicinity of the monastery, thinking he might have been thrown from his mule or met with some other accident. It never occurred to them to fear that he might have fallen into the hands of the brigands, for up to that time the monastery and its inmates had always been respected by them; but with the morning light they found a paper placed on a stone near their door, on which was written in rude Greek characters an intimation that unless a certain sum of money was deposited at a spot indicated within three days as the ransom of their Egoumenos, they might expect to have him sent back to them—lifeless! If the price demanded were paid he should return unharmed. The poor monks did not possess a single drachme. Their scanty store of coin in the little bag I had seen had been taken by the Egoumenos himself for the purchase of their food. The monastery stood in a total solitude. Even if they had been able to apply to the Government in Athens for money to meet the demand with any hope of success, the distance was too great for them to have accomplished their momentous errand in the short time allowed them; and had they even reached the capital, the re-

sult would no doubt have been the same as that which at a late period befell Lord Muncaster when he went as a messenger from the brigands who had captured his party, on behalf of Mr Herbert Mr Lloyd, and Mr Vyner left in their hands. The Government sent a troop of soldiers to meet the robbers instead of the ransom demanded for the English travellers and they were all three massacred as soon as the soldiers came in sight. The simple monks, however, only exhausted themselves in prayers before the sacred icons and at sunset on the third day they heard the tramp of the mule's feet coming straight to their door. They went out trembling, to find the lifeless body of their Egoumenos tied on the back of the animal with a bullet in his heart.

Soon after our visit to the monastery we went to Constantinople on our way to England, and there had much pleasant intercourse with Sir Stratford Canning (afterwards Lord Stratford de Redcliffe) the well-known ambassador to the Porte, and one of the grandest Englishmen who ever imposed the weight of a fine character on the extremely unsatisfactory moral qualities of the "unspeakable Turk." We knew him well, as he was a friend of my father's, and had visited us in Athens; but as I was a mere young girl in those days, it was not until we enjoyed his hospitality at the Embassy that I had the opportunity of real personal intercourse with him. He was known to the native population by the title of the "Greeks' Elchi," which implied a formidable range of power, both by virtue of his high office and from the strength of his personal qualities. He possessed, as Lord Palmerston had said of him, the rare gift of political genius, and in manner he was apt to be haughty and stern; but his

intimate friends, and the men working under him at the Embassy, found him invariably kind and considerate. It was a well-known fact that the Sultan of the day, Abdul Medjid, stood greatly in awe of him; and I must own to having shared in some degree the feelings of that potentate with regard to the great ambassador, till I went one day with my father to dine at the Embassy. It happened that there was no other lady guest at the party excepting the members of his own family, so he took me down to the dining-room and placed me next to himself at table: there, to my surprise, I found the reserved habitually silent man transformed into the most kind and genial host imaginable, doing his best to entertain his insignificant guest with the utmost cordiality; and such he continued to be during all the occasions when we met him afterwards during our stay at Constantinople.

That fair city of outward beauty and inward squalor and unsightliness is so accessible now and so well known to almost all travellers that any details concerning it are unnecessary; but there still existed in it at that time the slave-market, since abolished, ostensibly at least, with its hateful traffic publicly carried on. That women are there still secretly bought and sold is, I fear, an undoubted fact; but no such scene as we witnessed then could be beheld in Constantinople now. It made a vivid impression upon me. Our way to it led through the bazaars, filled with stalls full of rich stuffs and jewels and splendid armour, and then we reached the market of human life. It was a long low building, forming a square of considerable size. We mounted a few steps, and found ourselves on a large wooden platform running the whole length of the enclosure. It was divided into pens shut in by railings, in which

were confined the black slaves; while through the open doors leading into the house itself could be seen the veiled forms of the white women, grouped behind a wooden screen. On benches so placed as to command a view of both were the buyers, coarse looking Turks, whose calm searching gaze seemed to take in every detail. The merchant conducting the sale stood before them, talking and gesticulating with great vehemence. He turned to one of the pens, which was filled with young Circassian women, most of whom were very handsome. They were seated close together on the ground in an attitude of listless despondency, their white garments flowing round them; and as they gazed up at me with their sad dark eyes, I felt painfully how they must envy the free and happy stranger come to look on them in their infamy and misery. The slave-trader came forward, followed by a phlegmatic-looking Turk, and seizing one of the women by the arm, forced her to stand up before this man, who it appeared wished to buy her. He proceeded to inspect her, very much in the same manner as he might have examined a horse or a dog, and his decision was unfavourable: he turned away with a contemptuous movement of the head, and the slave-merchant in a rage thrust back the unfortunate girl, who sank down trembling among her companions in captivity. This scene was as much as we could stand, and we left the place hurriedly at once: it is well indeed that such sights can be witnessed no more, at least in Europe.

I visited various of my relations in Scotland after returning from Greece that summer, and on two occasions I had travelling companions of whose renown I knew nothing, but whose names are of those that live in public memory. One morning I had been

placed in the inside of a coach with only my maid outside as an escort, those primitive vehicles being at that time the only mode of transit through much of the fairest Scottish scenery, when the door was opened, and a gentleman sprang in and took his seat opposite to me. He was not young, his iron-grey hair curled in little rings over his forehead, his eyes were very bright and piercing, and his keen clever countenance was exceedingly pleasant in its expression. He began to converse with me as we rolled along in a most cordial manner. He spoke of the Highlands, about which he found I knew nothing, and expatiated on the many charms they possessed for him.

"Then I suppose," he said, "you have never seen a grand full-grown stag bounding over the heather, with a fine head of antlers standing up like the branches of a tree, and going like the wind for swiftness." No, I answered, I had never seen one, and I did not even know what size they were. "What size!" he exclaimed—"neither his size nor his weight are small, I can tell you! Why, a full-sized stag could knock over this ramshackle old coach in a moment with one butting run at it." "What splendid animals they must be," I said; "it seems too cruel that people go after them only to shoot them!" "I do not shoot them, my dear young lady; I make quite another use of them." "Surely you do not eat them," I said. He burst into a hearty laugh. "No, certainly that is not my connection with them, though I will not say I do not go in for a haunch of venison when it comes in my way; but I do not seek the acquaintance of Highland stags on that account." Then he began to talk of dogs, telling me the most charming and pathetic stories of their power of

affection and faithfulness. When we parted he explained who he was, and said, "Now you shall know what I do with the stags. I paint them." He was Sir Edwin Landseer.

Not long after I was travelling through Scotland with my brother and we were in one of the steamers on the Caledonian Canal when he brought a gentleman to me whom he introduced as Mr Robert Chambers. He has certainly not been forgotten as an author and publisher, and, above all, a geologist. He had the most homely, pleasant manners imaginable, and his thoughtful face, with its rather heavy features, was lit up by an expression of good-humour and kindliness. He and I soon became great friends, and we sat talking together on the deck of the steamer for hours at a time. He was drawn to me mainly, I think, because he had a large family of daughters, whom he liked to describe to me, saying they were the very delight of his life. Soon, however, he drifted from his domestic concerns into that which seemed to be even dearer to his heart—the vicissitudes of this planet during the earlier stages of its mysterious existence, when he declared it had been inhabited for a certain number of ages by pre-Adamite man, and for other periods by tremendous monsters with very long names. He got into an excited state of enthusiasm on these subjects. He produced from his pocket specimens of the various strata he had knocked off from the rocks with a hammer, which was his inseparable companion, and pointed out to me proofs of the glacial age and other ancient variations of climate, hinting that these indications differed considerably from the conclusions of some other records. He did not seem to

have gone deep enough into the matter to perceive that they only did so when those records were taken *au pied de la lettre*, as it was never designed they should be. Now, I must own I did not at all like being desired to grope down into the bowels of the earth with my lecturer, instead of enjoying the glorious beauty of the scenery round me. Geology had not been one of the studies habitually undertaken by girls educated in Athens, where music and painting and sculpture were much more favourite means of culture; and so at last I lost patience and exclaimed, "Mr Chambers, you really must not go on undressing these lovely landscapes—tearing off their beautiful green and purple robes, and exposing their poor naked bones, which I do not wish to see at all. Do let us enjoy them in their own fair aspect of exquisite light and shade and sunshine, bringing out the delicate outline of these graceful hills, while we leave the underground regions, with the skeletons of the megatherium and all the rest of them, in their native gloom and obscurity." He looked at me for a moment, not apparently quite sure whether to be amused or angry; then he burst into a hearty laugh, and shook my hand. "Upon my word, you are right, my dear lady; we ought not to neglect the feast of colour and light spread out before us, for that certainly does come from the source of all good," and he looked up reverently. I had much pleasant correspondence with Robert Chambers afterwards, and he was always a kind friend to me; but I never saw him again after we parted then, as my brother was going to take me on into Argyleshire.

My stay at that time in Scotland was very brief, and was never renewed till more than forty years

later, when I spent one month there with my brother. But, before I left it, I was taken to hear Dr Chalmers preach in a dark out-of-the-way church, which was filled, apparently, only by people from the lowest parts of the town. I am afraid his sermon did not impress me so much as it ought to have done. The uncouth appearance of the preacher, his rough manner, and very broad native accent, seemed to me rather repelling, though it was impossible not to recognise and appreciate his rugged eloquence and manifest earnestness, with the determined stand he made for righteousness of the highest type, which was conveyed in all his words. He was, however, a singular contrast to my earliest teacher in divinity,—the gentle and refined Dean Ramsay. He had married an American lady, but they had no children, and, although they led a most quiet and retired life, the Dean's saintly character had a powerful influence on all who knew him. The last time I remember seeing him he had, with his unvarying kindness, offered hospitality to a newly arrived curate, who had a wife and a large family, and was not yet provided with a home. "My dear," said the Dean, in a pathetic tone of voice, "I am slightly oppressed at present, for my house is full of the wailings of infancy." Dean Ramsay was a type of the many good and steadfast churchmen who adhered to the principles set forth in the Prayer-book, before there was any talk of the Oxford Movement or the "Tracts for the Times."

The earlier years of our residence in Oxford were signalised by weighty events of public interest, which naturally affected strongly the lives of individuals. The first of these was the Crimean war, and

Canning accomplished a most noble work at that time, in spite of the claims upon her and her husband in general society. She undertook all the home arrangements for the nursing staff in connection with our army, and managed them most admirably. Very early on a dark winter morning I was deputed to convey my small regiment of nurses from Oxford to Lady Canning's house, and as a result I spent the greater part of that day in the company of one of the most charming persons I ever met with. Lady Canning was quite beautiful, and in manners and speech engaging and graceful to the utmost degree. She was so perfectly frank and sympathetic that we seemed to become friends immediately. She was enthusiastic in the cause of our soldiers, and eagerly desirous that everything should be done for their comfort. She left me in the drawing-room, while she went down to interview the nurses, and send them off to the lodgings where they were to pass the night. Then she came back and entered clearly and carefully into the manner in which the home concerns of the nurses were to be left in my hands. Later we spoke of common acquaintances till the door opened, and an elderly lady was announced as Mrs Stanley, the mother of Arthur Stanley, afterwards Dean of Westminster. I was introduced to her, and then sat listening to her conversation with Lady Canning, from which I arrived at the conclusion that there could not easily be a lady of more decided character than herself. The theme which almost entirely engrossed her was the annoyance and trouble she had experienced from the necessity of managing a weak-minded curate, whose untoward proceedings were, she asserted, really too provoking.

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On this subject she expatiated long, declaring her intention of giving her *bête noire* his quietus in some fashion or other as speedily as possible; while Lady Canning, in gentle soothing tones, asked if it were not possible by some means to provide the unfortunate gentleman with a little more backbone? Other visitors came in, and I took my leave.

Thereafter during the whole duration of the Crimean war I was in correspondence with Miss Nightingale, and I admired beyond measure the admirable care and accuracy with which she organised every detail necessitated by the interests of the persons working under her. She had decided that part of the nurses' salaries was to be sent to me for investment in the savings-bank, and the precision with which she made the necessary calculations, even as regarded the most minute sums, in the midst of all the heavy responsibilities which weighed upon her, was truly remarkable.

Scarce had the dark cloud passed away which brooded over this country during the war, when the yet deeper shadow of the Indian Mutiny blotted out the sunshine from the lives of those most highly placed, as well as of countless numbers whose anguish was borne in obscurity. The only incident with which I was to some extent connected with regard to it was, I think, one of the most deeply pathetic of all the heartrending events which then occurred in that ill-fated part of our empire. A young officer, who was a kinsman of ours, though I had never personally met him, was in charge of the Tower of Jhansi, and when the terrible revolt first broke out he was residing there with his wife and two little daughters, four

and five years old. Before any aid could come to him the tower was surrounded by a crowd of Sepoys, bent on the most ruthless cruelty and slaughter. The few soldiers he had with him were helpless against their overwhelming numbers. He saw that his doom was sealed, and that, also, of those dearer to him than life. He bade his men shift for themselves as best they could, and then he took his wife and children to the highest room at the top of the tower, and stood waiting with his loaded revolver in his hand. He heard the countless Sepoys swarming up the stairs, having quickly disposed of the few soldiers, one of whom, only, managed to hide in a dark corner, where he saw all that passed, and related it afterwards. It was well known that these Indian rebels were like fiends in their cruelty; and as their exulting shouts were heard coming close to the door of that last refuge, the young wife turned to her husband and said quietly, "Dear, you must not let me fall into the power of these savage men; you know it would be worse than death. Will you shoot me yourself? Let me die only by your hand." He looked at her, his best beloved, his gentle, tender wife, and who could fathom the agony of that moment to his loyal heart; but he knew she was right. "Yes," he said quickly, for there was not a moment to lose; "it will be best so. Good-bye, my darling," and he fired the shot which laid her a corpse at his feet. Happily he did not live many minutes after. The Sepoys burst into the room and cut him down at once, furious that part of their prey had escaped them, as they saw the young woman lying dead, and then they killed the two girls, and left the whole family a ghastly heap on the floor. It is a sad coincidence that

the younger brother of this officer was one of the victims in the much more recent massacre at Manipur.

During the long peaceful interval between the Indian Mutiny and the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian war I led a very retired life; but inasmuch as it was spent in Oxford, I had the opportunity of making acquaintance with various persons whose well-known names are likely to inspire interest in any little details concerning them. One of those, whose recent death has brought his remarkable qualities before the notice of the public, was Benjamin Jowett, Master of Balliol College. He belonged to a very different school of thought from most of my friends, and my acquaintance with him was of the slightest until the time when he became Vice-Chancellor. I was therefore rather surprised when he suddenly walked into my sitting-room one day and asked if I could spare time for some conversation with him on a subject that had become important to him. His object in this visit brought out prominently one of his most admirable characteristics—his invariable determination that whatever he did should be done in the best possible manner, and that he would spare no pains in acquiring all such information as he thought might be necessary for him in the accomplishment of this purpose. One of the duties which devolved upon him with his new dignity in the University was to preside over the Vice-Chancellor's Court, where culprits were likely to be brought before him for judgment, of a class which had never previously come within his sphere of knowledge. He had been told that, from various circumstances, the difficulties of dealing with those persons were not unknown to me, and with his usual straightforward simplicity he came to me

at once to learn anything he could on the subject in question. He walked in with a pleasant smile on his round face, and quietly told me his object in seeking me; then he sat down, looking the meekest of men, with his white locks crowning the cherubic countenance which has been made known to the public by endless photographs, and also, I regret to say, by caricatures. Our conversation on the matters which required elucidation lasted for some time, while I simply told him anything I thought could be useful to him, without of course the least intention of imposing my views upon him. My dismay was therefore very great when, on rising up to leave me, he said, "I am much obliged to you for your clear instructions, and I shall do my best to obey your orders closely." I protested against such an interpretation of my simple statements, and assured him that nothing was further from my mind than the idea of instructing the Master of Balliol, or giving any orders to the Vice-Chancellor. "I am not so presumptuous," I said. "Nevertheless you have decidedly done so," he answered, smiling; "you have given me full instructions, and you will find that I shall follow them implicitly." He looked at the moment, with a merry smile on his good-humoured face, so exactly like a mischievous boy, that his preposterous charge against me seemed less absurd than it would have done otherwise. I met him often after that, when he always greeted me in the most kindly manner, and seemed to consider we had established a friendship between us, though I fear it might not have lasted long had any of the vital questions arisen on which we should have entirely disagreed.

A Fellow of Oriel College, whom

I knew well during many years, was a gentleman of a very different stamp—John William Burgon, afterwards Dean of Chichester, and author of a book entitled 'Lives of Twelve Good Men.' He was undoubtedly the thirteenth good man himself. He was for some time vicar of St Mary's—the University church, so strongly connected with the memory of Newman; and no sight was more familiar in Oxford than Mr Burgon's tall thin figure and sallow face, with its somewhat owl-like features, his long college-gown flying out behind him from the energetic rapidity of his movements. He was a scholar of high repute, devoting himself almost entirely to Scripture criticism, and, as is well known, becoming nearly rabid in his animosity to the Revised Version. He was a most benevolent man, devoted to good works, and eagerly seeking any opportunity of helping his fellow-creatures; but he had withal a childlike simplicity of character which, joined to his far-reaching philanthropy, often brought him into very unusual positions—such as his driving about for hours in London, alone in a hansom cab, with a far from respectable girl for whom he was trying to find a home. He spoke of it as if he had almost danced for joy when he got rid of her at last.

Several years later, when as Dean of Chichester he passed from this world, some discussion arose as to his history in one respect. It was always supposed that he had been a confirmed bachelor from the first, but various hints in the public notices of his life gave rise to an impression that he had been married in his early youth. I think this is sufficiently disproved by a remark which he once made to me, and was very characteristic. He was talking

with much compassion of a gentleman who had just lost his wife, and said to me, "Now, you must know that is the very reason why I am not married. I felt so much for the young woman in the future if I should have happened to die first: I could not be so cruel as to risk a poor thing becoming a widow." Dean Burgon did not, however, miss feminine sympathy, for he had sisters and nieces who were devoted to him, and brightened all the latter years of his life.

I suppose there could hardly have been a greater contrast to Dean Burgon than the gentleman I met soon afterwards at the house of a scientific friend: before I heard his name I was struck by the decision and masterfulness, so to speak, of his expression, and the keenness of his eyes looking out scrutinisingly from under his iron-grey eyebrows on every one present. He was introduced to me as Professor Huxley, and some remark which he misunderstood from the lady of the house made him imagine that I was interested in the education of children. This was a complete mistake, for as it happens I do not possess the teaching faculty in the least, and I have never attempted to acquire it; but Mr Huxley plunged then and there into a vigorous lecture on the subject, addressed exclusively to me, in which he laid down the law with the utmost vigour, and gave me the impression that he was a man who believed himself to be master of every topic which might happen to be under discussion. At the same time I could not but appreciate the warmth and kindness of his manner to me, though up to that day I had been a total stranger to him. When our hostess gently explained to him that my pursuits were of a very different nature from the care of the innocents he attributed to me, he

turned at once quite as genially to the subjects thus suggested, and discussed more difficult modes for benefiting humanity, with the same enthusiastic fervour. The fact of Mr Huxley's well-known antagonism to the Christian faith naturally repelled me very strongly, and I made no attempt to continue the acquaintance; but I could not ignore the evidence in his words and manner of great benevolence of character, and a genuine desire on his part to cultivate brotherly kindness towards his fellow-creatures.

The same sentiment, bearing fruit in a diametrically opposite manner, actuated a man I also met formerly, and whose name, drifting into obscurity, is probably scarcely known to the present generation—Joseph Wolfe the missionary. The master passion in his case was fired by his desire for the conversion of the Jews, his own people, from whom he was only alienated to some extent by his adoption of the faith they rejected. I was invited to meet him one evening at the house of a lady who was his devoted adherent, nor was she the only one who appreciated his really estimable qualities, for his wife, Lady Georgina Wolfe, had left a luxurious home to join him in the work to which his life was dedicated. There was a large gathering to meet Dr Wolfe, and we were told that he would address us on the subject of his labours among the Jews. We sat down expectantly, and in front of us stood a stout, short, elderly man, an unmistakable Hebrew in features and complexion. He spoke English fluently, but with an extremely strong foreign accent, and his manner and phraseology were peculiar, in a fashion which made it very difficult to listen to him with the seriousness which his subject demanded. He enlarged on his work in Palestine and Asia

Minor generally, which had undoubtedly been of a most praiseworthy description; but when he proceeded to illustrate the customs of his race by chanting some of their native songs in a high-pitched voice, it proved very difficult for me, light-hearted enough in those days, to hear him with due calm and decorum. Even his imitation of the lamentations of the Jews at the wailing-place outside the walls of fallen Jerusalem, which ought to have been deeply pathetic, became from his intonation and style exactly the reverse. But the culminating overthrow of my gravity came with an anecdote which he told of an Arab chief who had offered him his daughter in marriage, and anxiously pressed the beautiful bride upon him. "Yes," exclaimed Dr Wolfe, stretching out his arms towards a quiet dignified lady who sat on a sofa near him, "Yes, that chief begged me to have his child, with the brown eyes like a gazelle, to wed her and keep her always; but I said to him, No! no! I have my Georgina at home; I want no more wives. I have my Georgina in my house already, and that is enough, oh, quite enough." I must own that I had to beat a hasty retreat from the effects of this speech on the propriety of demeanour I had been trying so hard to maintain. There is no doubt, however, that Dr Wolfe did really accomplish a great work among his people.

I have spoken hitherto of persons I have met whose names are everywhere familiar words; but I have also encountered some unknown heroes, whose striking qualities no less deserve a record. One of these was an Italian artist, who was a singular instance of a father's devoted absorbing love for his child. Raffaello Ceccoli was, or at least believed himself to be, a lineal descendant of the great

Raphael, and he had certainly from some source derived very great artistic talent. In his loyal enthusiasm for his gifted ancestor he insisted on appearing in the costume which he believed must have been worn by the grand old master in his own times. As Ceccoli was a tall handsome man, it suited him very well; and in Athens, where he was living when I knew him, it was not so unlike the national dress as to attract much notice. He wore a black or purple velvet tunic, a round cap of the same material, under which his long hair fell in massive curls, and he had white silk stockings and pointed embroidered shoes of a most medieval description. His pictures were admirable; but there was not much custom for them in Greece, so that he was obliged to eke out his slender means by giving painting lessons, and I was one of his most constant pupils. Every morning very early I was escorted by our Greek servant to his studio, where I remained working all day at the easel till the setting of the burning sun rendered it possible for my father or brother to come through the glaring streets to bring me home. In this manner I became intimately acquainted with the painter's beautiful young daughter, Argia. She was his only child, and he was devoted to her with all the passionate fervour of which his southern nature was capable. He would work night and day to procure for her any luxury or amusement she might desire, and she was the one object of all his hopes and aspirations, the very life of his life. She was indeed a most fascinating young girl—guileless and naïve, and strongly imbued with the romance and poetry of her beloved native land. Neither she nor her father could speak any language but Italian, and I think they would have refused to learn any

other, as they considered Italy to be the garden of the world and absolute perfection in every way. Argia and I became great friends in our daily intercourse, and she would sit beside my easel when her father left me to carry out his instructions, telling me all she thought and felt with the most innocent candour. One day she drew shyly from within her bodice a little love-letter which she had received from a young *compatriote*, and described to me with much ardour the superhuman good qualities with which she credited him. I asked if she was likely to be married to him; but she shook her pretty head dolefully. "Ah, no! he can never be anything but my *inamorato*, for my father could not part with me to be married or in any other way. It would break his heart. He loves me so—ah! how he loves me, *il povero padre!*" I urged her strongly, however, to tell her father all that was in her heart on the subject of her little romance. He was such a fine character that I thought his great love for her would prove sufficiently unselfish to make him desire her happiness before his own. But a very different fate awaited beautiful Argia. After we had left Greece and were living in England, I heard that she had died suddenly from one of the rapid maladies brought on, I believe, by exposure to the burning orient sun. Some months later I received a letter from Ceccoli telling me that he was in London, where he had come to dispose of all his pictures—he would paint no more—and he wished very much to see me. I went to visit him as soon as I could, and I found him in a small dingy lodging, which contrasted painfully with the bright studio in Athens where I had passed so many happy days. But the change in

Ceccoli himself was simply appalling. It was as if the blow he had received by the death of his child had stricken him physically as well as mentally. His tall frame was bent as if he had been an old decrepit man, and he was pale and mournful to the last degree. His picturesque costume had been discarded, and his long hair cut off. His manner, subdued and solemn, was wholly different from the gay vivacity and enthusiasm with which he used to talk of anything that interested him. He grasped my hand without speaking when I came in, but fixed on me a look eloquent of his anguish in the loss of Argia, to whom he knew I had been much attached. It seemed impossible to speak on any other subject, though I shrank from naming her. At last I murmured a few words of sympathy for him in having had to endure so cruel a parting. He answered in a low hollow voice, and said, "We are not parted—*la tengo qui con me!*" I was startled beyond measure by this intimation that he had his dead child with him there in the London lodging, but it was the simple truth. He had not been able to submit to a separation even by the hand of death, and he had had his cherished daughter embalmed, and carried her with him wherever he went. It was such a ghastly idea that I could not bring myself to ask him any detail on the subject, so I do not know how he managed to avoid the discovery of his sad possession, which would have brought him within the grasp of the law; but it was really a relief when I had reason to believe later that the fiery pain which was consuming him had finally burned out his life, and that he and his Argia were laid side by side in one of the lovely burial-places of his native land.



The Franco-Prussian war, the third great convulsion of opposing forces through which I have lived, brought to light qualities of a very noble nature in two young men who had, I think, a genuine right to be termed unknown heroes. They were Aristide and Emil Raugabé, sons of my brother-in-law, at that time Greek ambassador in Paris. They were both full of patriotic ambition, and had always been destined to serve their own country in the Hellenic army; but their father had been advised to let them first enter the Prussian service, in order to benefit by the splendid military training which could there be obtained. It had been intended that they should only profit by this advantage till they were thoroughly qualified to act with efficiency in the army of their native land, and then return at once to Greece. But for the time they had become Prussian officers, and when the war with France broke out there could be no question that they must take part in it along with the German regiments to which they belonged, and in the end the lives of both were sacrificed to an alien cause in the interests of a country with which they had no natural connection. The anomaly of their position was strikingly illustrated by a painful incident which occurred when the Prussian troops had invested Paris and the siege was on the point of commencing. Their younger brother was with the rest of the family at the Greek embassy in Paris, and an order had gone forth from the authorities of the besieged city to the effect that every young man within its walls who had attained the age of eighteen years, whatever might be his nationality, was to be enrolled in a band raised under a French commander, to be stationed at

once on the ramparts and take part in the defence of the city. The younger Raugabé was summoned for this duty at once, and it of course involved the terrible position of his being under arms to fight against his own two brothers. There was no escape for him if he remained in Paris; but to avoid so cruel a fate, his friends succeeded, with the utmost difficulty, in getting him out of the beleaguered city at the very last moment, before all egress became completely impossible. The two young Greeks with the Prussian troops did not know at the time how nearly they had been called to fight their own brother; but they went through various episodes of a most trying nature during that long dreadful struggle.

Many adventures did the brothers relate to us in their rare letters, but the end soon came for them both. Emil, the younger of the two, was on guard one night at the door of the general's tent, where he had remained for eighteen hours without its being possible for any one to relieve him in the disorganised state of his regiment. There was snow on the ground, and the cold was piercing. When morning came, it was found that the poor young officer had sustained the rupture of a blood-vessel, from which injury he never recovered. A little later his elder brother, Aristide, fell a victim also to the rigours of the campaign, and Greece never had the services of these, her devoted sons, which the foreign country had absorbed.

Among the varied scenes of my life, I should like to record one which was supposed to savour of the supernatural; and, although that was a mistake, it was memorable from the locality in which it befell me—the site of Mycenæ, on the plain of Argos. No traces

AN UNCROWNED KING.¹

A ROMANCE OF HIGH POLITICS.

CHAPTER XVII.—MINE AND COUNTERMINE.

THE tinkling of a little bell aroused Nadia when it was broad daylight. Rising stiff and cramped from the uncomfortable position in which she had fallen asleep, kneeling at her bedside, she went to the window, which looked into the courtyard of the inn. A priest and a youthful acolyte were picking their way across the square on their way out—not the Greek pope of the village, but a Roman Catholic priest from Boloszen, the town in which the doctor lived—and it was the boy who was ringing the bell she had heard. Divining at once that the priest had been called to administer the last sacraments to her mother, she hastened downstairs, to find the O'Malachy and the travelled waiter talking in low voices in the passage.

"And the gracious young lady was not even awakened?" she heard the waiter say.

"À quoi cela servirait-il? Made-moiselle est Protestante," replied the O'Malachy, and the words fell on Nadia's ear without conveying any impression to her mind. She advanced towards her mother's door, and the waiter made a hasty movement as though to prevent her entering, but she passed him and went in. Then she knew.

Stepping noiselessly, she drew back the sheet from the quiet form upon the bed, and wondered at the expression on the face. Was it the hand of death alone that had stamped upon the beautiful features the look of calm which they had

never worn in the stormy days of life? Or had God spoken to the soul in the silent hours of the night, when no human watcher was at hand, and the friendly and engrossing sounds of earth were hushed at last, and was the priest's anointing only a feeble sign of the peace of God which passeth understanding? Nadia felt no inclination to weep as she gazed at the dead face. "Two hands upon the breast, and labour is past"—the Scythian proverb recurred to her mind, and she felt a sudden lightening of the load that had weighed her down since first she knew of her mother's danger. The issue was not hers, it belonged to God—God, who knew all the circumstances of Barbara O'Malachy's life, the bad training, the evil influences, and later, the dead-weight of an ill-spent past, and the constant companionship of one who owed it to her that he had preferred dishonour and reward to a hero's death.

What the full effect of such a companionship must have been, Nadia did not realise until the O'Malachy entered the room, and found her still standing and gazing entranced. She dropped the sheet as he came up to the bed.

"She looks so peaceful," she said, with a catch in her voice, "but I wish I had been here. You might have sent for me."

"Sure there was not time," replied the O'Malachy, lamely enough. "It was not until daylight that I saw how nearly she was gone, and

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The O'Malachy looked pleased. "Sure we'll not be partud altogether at all," he said. "If all goes well in Thracia, I'll come and see you, and we'll maybe find ut possible to set up housekeeping together in some place."

Nadia shuddered. "If all went well in Thracia," meant in her father's mind that when they next met, Caerleon's blood would be between them. She changed the subject hastily.

"Will you telegraph to Louis, father, or shall I?"

"Ah, it wouldn't be a bad thing to have um here," responded the O'Malachy, thoughtfully. "But no. Louis is a soldier, and he must not leave his duty. I'll not have ut said that Michael O'Malachy called his son away from the work he had to do. I'll write to um meself."

The day dragged slowly by, and the next followed like it. The O'Malachy was restless and disturbed, dividing his time between watching the road which led up the mountain and making up arrears of correspondence. To Nadia, who knew what he was expecting, and the arrangements which his letters were intended to make, the inaction was almost unbearable, but it was not until shortly before the funeral that she found how much the suspense had tried her. Feverishly anxious to go out, to do something to relieve the tension of the long hours, it cost her a flood of tears and a sharp wordy battle when she found that she was not intended to follow her mother to the grave. The O'Malachy was inflexible. In Ireland, he said, ladies never attended funerals, and he would not have things done otherwise than properly here because they were out on a God-forsaken hill in a desolate (he pronounced it dissolut) country. Nadia gave in at last, feeling too much exhausted to

contend longer, and submitted to remain in a quiet corner of the inn-garden by herself.

She had been sitting there for some time, in a spot quite concealed from the house by bushes and an intervening angle of wall, and the sad procession had wound its way out of sight and hearing, when she was startled by a persistent rustling in the boughs of a large tree which overhung the parapet near her. It was bare of leaves, but its branches were so thickly covered with ivy that they concealed the cause of the disturbance as completely as if they had been laden with foliage, and the effect was sufficiently alarming. In the strained state of her nerves, Nadia's first impulse was to take to flight and seek refuge in the house; but she collected herself with an effort, and walked boldly up to the tree, asking, in the best Thracian she could muster—

"Is there any one here?"

At first there was no answer beyond a further rustling immediately over her head, and looking up quickly she caught sight of a man peering at her through the ivy-leaves. For a moment they remained staring at one another, and then the intruder, feeling apparently that there was no possibility of further concealment, bent down towards her, and asked in a low voice in German—

"The gracious lady is related to the Herr Oberst O'Malachy?"

"Yes," said Nadia, astonished by the contrast between the speaker's appearance and his words. His dress was that of a wandering artisan seeking for work, but his voice was gentlemanly and his accent refined.

"Then may I trouble her to hand to the Herr Oberst in private a small packet? I was charged to deliver it only to himself or the gracious lady, and I have waited

achy's return, of something she had seen among her mother's belongings. It was a dagger about ten inches long, very bright and sharp, concealed ingeniously in a case shaped like a furled fan, and she had a vague idea that it might serve her as a means of defence on her way to Bellaviste, and perhaps stand her in good stead when there, if she wished to frighten any one. It was alarming enough to her, at any rate, and she hoped earnestly that she might not be obliged to produce it at all, while the mere thought of using it made her shudder; but she hid it carefully in her dress, and went back to the garden. Meeting her father when he entered, she gave him the letter.

"How did you get this?" he asked, looking at her suspiciously.

"A man gave it to me in the garden. He looked like a Thracian," she answered.

"You don't know um? Did he say anything?"

"He asked me to give it to you, and said that he was charged to deliver it only to one of us."

"Poor Louie!" said the O'Malachy, with apparent irrelevance. "Boys will get into scrapes now and then, and if he takes some trouble to write to his old father without his colonel's finding out, why in the wide world wouldn't he?"

Understanding that she was intended to accept this transparent fiction as an explanation of the unusual way in which the letter had arrived, Nadia was silent, and her father retired to read it. When he returned, his manner was hurried and eager.

"This letter brings me marching orders," he said, and she noticed that he avoided meeting her eye. "Poor Louie's greatly troubled. He has got into a very bad scrape, and his business calls me to Tatarjé by the morning train to-morrow."

"Oh, what has he been doing?" cried Nadia, in genuine terror. For the moment she really thought that, besides the expected intimation, the letter must have contained bad news of the kind her father indicated.

The O'Malachy frowned. "It's not the kind of business we generally talk over with ladies," he said, severely; and if Nadia's heart had not been so heavy, she could have laughed at the dignity of his manner as he administered this rebuke to her curiosity. All fear for Louis left her mind instantly, and she was ready to listen to her father when he resumed, after a moment's interval to let the rebuff take effect, "I'll likely have to leave here by six to get to the station in time for me train. What to do about you I don't know. You must telegraph to Princess Soudaroff at once, but your train doesn't start from Boloszen until mid-day to-morrow, and I don't like leaving you alone here."

"Oh, please don't trouble about me," said Nadia. "Why, there is not even a connection between Boloszen and the Thracian railway, is there? No, if you will settle the hotel bill, and arrange about a carriage to take me to Boloszen, I can start by myself quite comfortably." It would not have been human nature not to add, "You must think of Louis first, you know."

The O'Malachy lent a ready ear to the suggestion. It was evident that his preparations at Tatarjé were in rather a backward state, probably owing to the uncertainty which had prevailed hitherto as to the precise date of the inspection, for his anxiety to be gone was great. Nadia packed for him such things as he would allow her to touch, and finally saw him drive off in the morning, bound for the starting-point of the Thracian railway, which had at last been completed as far as

the capital. Now that he was out of the way, she must mature and carry out her own plans. In accordance with her father's injunction, she had telegraphed the evening before to Princess Soudaroff, asking whether she would receive her, but adding that she must pay a hurried visit to Bellaviste before starting for Scythia. The answer arrived this morning, assuring her of a warm welcome, and promising that the Princess would send a lady of her household to meet her on the Scythian frontier if she would let her know when she expected to reach it. Nadia had been watching anxiously for this telegram—not that she was doubtful of her welcome, but because she could not well start on her journey before the arrival of the missive. As soon as she had read it she sought the travelled waiter.

"I am obliged to change the Herr Oberst's plans for me," she said. "I shall not go to Boloszjen in the carriage, but I want you to get the luggage taken there and booked for Pavelsburg in my name. Then even if I am late for the train the boxes will not be lost. I am going to see little Ilona, the shepherd's daughter, and to take her some clothes. I shall not come back here, but I believe it is possible from the shepherd's hut to walk to the station beyond Boloszjen and catch the train there, is it not? Ilona's father will show me the way, so you need not be afraid if you do not see me at Boloszjen."

The waiter and the landlord were both deeply grieved by the gracious young lady's determination to fatigue herself so much before starting on her journey, but she would not yield to any of their suggestions, accepting only the offer of a boy to carry the parcel of clothes. Even this she would have declined if she had not feared that such a course

would excite suspicion, and she paid and dismissed her attendant as soon as the cottage came in sight. Her plans were already made, and she walked on boldly, carrying her bundle, which contained the Thracian peasant-dress that Madame O'Malachy had worn on the fateful night of her accident. When she entered the hut she was welcomed with a cry of delight by the sick child, who had proved one of her most successful nursing cases, and her mother; the father was away with his sheep. Nadia had no time to waste. She had picked up sufficient Thracian to make herself understood, and she plunged into her subject at once.

"I want you to let me change my dress here, Yerma," she said. "I have a friend in great danger at Bellaviste, and I must go to warn him." Judging from the sympathetic faces of the mother and child that she was safe with them, she went on, "I thought I would wear clothes like yours, because I should attract less attention on the road. My own dress I will leave with you. You will be able to make a winter frock out of it for Ilona."

The delicacy of the shepherd's wife and daughter surprised her, for they asked no questions and simply did their best to help her. Under Yerma's directions she put on the coarse linen dress and heavy sheepskin-lined pelisse which, together with the high boots reaching to the knee, form the winter dress of the Thracian women. Then she knelt down by Ilona's bed, that the child might arrange for her the handkerchief which serves as bonnet and also as veil, being pulled so far over the face that it is sometimes difficult to see from under it. Ilona called out in delight that no one would recognise the gracious lady in this dress, and Yerma, after conjuring her to hide her hands in



the long sleeves, agreed with the child. Gloves are hardly ever worn in Thracia, the wide cuffs of the sleeves serving as a protection from the cold. Her toilet complete, Nadia stooped and kissed the child, and left the cottage with Yerma, who had volunteered to show her the path which led down the mountain on this side. They said little as they made their way cautiously down the slippery hillside; but when they had reached the road which led to the distant station, Yerma fell on her knees and kissed Nadia's hand.

"God and the saints bless you for all your kindness to my little Ilona!" she said. "We shall all pray for you, gracious lady, and for the gracious gentleman at Bellaviste, that you may be in time to save him, and that you may both be happy."

"And only yesterday Carlino betrothed himself to the Princess Ottilie!" was the thought in Nadia's mind, as she turned away from the grateful woman with tears in her eyes, and set out on her long lonely journey. It was fortunate for her that winter had as yet scarcely set in, and that the weather was unusually dry, for in an ordinary season it would have been impossible for a woman to make her way alone along the road she was following. The cavernous ruts, into some of which good-sized boulders had been pitched, apparently with a view of filling up the holes, showed what the depth of mud must be in wet weather; and Nadia fancied that perhaps the boulders had not been placed in their present positions entirely at haphazard, as she had first imagined, for pedestrians might find them extremely useful, and even necessary, as stepping-stones. She took her way bravely over the uneven track, knowing that it must

eventually lead her to the station, if she only followed it far enough; but it was so long that at times she was ready to sit down in despair, imagining that she had lost her way, so unending appeared the narrow strip of rough stones and dry mud. But she had not cultivated fortitude and endurance all her life for nothing. The qualities which had led her to practise martyrdom as a child came to her aid now, and she toiled on, the remembrance of the mother and child praying for her in the shepherd's hut giving her fresh courage. The few wayfarers she met looked at her curiously as a stranger, but the fact that she had no luggage with her, and that she was able to answer their rough but kindly greetings in Thracian, seemed to avert any shadow of suspicion, and they passed her as a woman walking merely from one village to another. Still she pressed on, for it was now afternoon, and the train which would reach Bellaviste at noon on the morrow started at four o'clock, and an anxious fear seized upon her that after all she might not be in time to catch it. With panting breath and stumbling feet she hurried along, and at last saw in front of her the collection of wooden sheds which marked the starting-point of the Thracian railway system. The sight cheered her, and she almost lost her feeling of weariness during the last half-mile, although, when the station was reached and her ticket taken, she was glad to sink upon a bench and do nothing, think of nothing, but rest. When the train came in, she noticed its arrival, but it did not occur to her to take any active steps with regard to it, and had it not been for her neighbour on the bench, a pleasant-looking elderly woman laden with bundles, she would have been left behind.

Warned by this friend in need that the train was just about to start, Nadia insisted on helping her to carry her bundles, and established herself thankfully on the seat next to her in the carriage, which was built on the American pattern. They were the only women there, but the men gathered together at the other end, and talked among themselves, and Nadia's friend arranged her parcels on the bench in front of her, and producing a covered brazier filled with hot charcoal, invited Nadia to put her feet on it and make herself comfortable. She was a cheerful, talkative person, and beguiled the way with quaint legends of the hills and valleys through which they were passing—legends which would have been full of interest for her hearer if she had not been so tired. Her long walk, the close atmosphere of the train, and the monotonous voice of her companion, all combined to make Nadia overpoweringly sleepy, but she succeeded in dissembling the fact until an irresistible nod brought her head into sudden and violent contact with the good woman's shoulder.

"Have you heard the story of the young prince and his witch-mother?" the narrator was saying. "There was a learned gentleman from Bellaviste travelling in our parts this summer, who heard me telling it to the children, and he was so pleased with it that he wrote it all down, every word. But you are tired! Poor thing, lie down here, and take this bundle of mine for a pillow, and I will cover you with my cloak. No, don't thank me. I have a daughter just your age. She is married in Bellaviste, and I am going to see her now for the first time since the wedding."

All the time she was talking she was arranging a comfortable place on the bench for Nadia, and then

tucked her up in the most motherly way. Nadia was only too thankful to rest, for mind and body were alike worn out. But the strain upon her was too great to allow of peaceful sleep, and she woke at last with a start, shivering and trembling, to find her face wet with tears, and her friend laying a warning hand upon her shoulder.

"I woke you because you began to scream," she said. "You have been crying all the time, and talking in a language I don't understand, but I thought some of the men there might hear you if you talked loud, and know what you were saying."

"Thank you," said Nadia, sitting up and pushing back the hair from her face. "It was very kind of you to wake me, for I am in great trouble, and it might have done terrible harm if I had been understood. I will tell you what I am doing here," she went on, moved to confidence as she looked into the motherly eyes opposite her. "I have a friend in great danger at Bellaviste, and I have information which may save his life if I can only get there in time."

"But you are not a Thracian?"

"No, I come from the frontier, but my friend is in the Carlino regiment."

"Ah, he has been getting into trouble with his sergeant, I suppose? I know what it is: they always think the sergeant is hard upon them, until they become sergeants themselves, and then they can see no good in the men. My Elisaveta's husband is a sergeant in the city guard himself. But your sweetheart—ah, I know what 'friend' means—must have done something very foolish to get himself into such trouble."

"If he is killed it will be a shameful, horrible murder!" cried Nadia, hotly.



"Well, I suppose you have information to prove it. Are you going to the Minister for War?"

"Oh no, no! To the King."

"The King? Ah, that is wise, no doubt. He is young, and every one says he is kind-hearted, and he is going to be married, so that your sweetheart's case ought to touch his feelings."

"Yes," murmured Nadia, feeling the irony of the situation to the full.

"Yes, I think that on the whole you have come at a very favourable time. Have you written out your petition?"

"No, I never thought of that," said Nadia. "I mean to try and speak to him."

"But he might not see you, or he might have no time to listen. If he had a paper to remind him of you, he might tell his brother, Prince Kyrillo,"—Nadia did not at first recognise Cyril under this designation,—*"to inquire into the case afterwards. We must certainly get one drawn up. To-morrow morning we wait for half an hour at a place where a cousin of mine lives. She is the station-master's wife, and she will be able to write for us. Or perhaps you can write? But it ought to be in French. Our King is learning Thracian, but he does not know it well yet, and it would be an advantage that he should be able to read the petition at once."*

"I can write French," said Nadia.

"Really? Ah, I thought you were above what you seemed to be. I shouldn't wonder if you were a lady's-maid, now, in some noble family?"

"I am in the household of a lady of high rank," said Nadia. Her friend looked at her doubtfully.

"I hope your sweetheart is good enough for you. I should say you

might do better than a private soldier—even in the Carlinos. Don't you let yourself be led away by a handsome face and a fine uniform, my girl. An honest farmer with plenty of cows and pigs, and a little money hidden behind a brick in the chimney, might make you a far better husband, and you wouldn't have all the trouble of moving about after the regiment, which is bad enough when you are a sergeant's wife, but is terrible when you have only a private's pay to depend upon. But there! young folks will choose as they like, and it's no use speaking to them."

"He is good enough to marry a princess," said Nadia, with a choke in her voice. "Please tell me about the petition. What shall I say in it?"

"Well, you don't want to tell everything, or he won't need to see you, and you want to be able to throw yourself at his feet, and entreat his mercy. We must make up something slow and sad—like the stories." And to Nadia's astonishment, the practical business-like woman threw back her head, half-closed her eyes, and half-recited, half-chanted, her improvised plaint.

"MOST ILLUSTRIOUS MAJESTY,—
Deign to permit a suppliant to approach your royal throne.

"She comes not to cast a shadow upon your marriage joy, but to plead with you for one she loves more than life.

"The beloved of her soul is doomed to death—death undeserved, death most cruel—and you alone can avert this fearful sorrow.

"Great is the power of the law, but greater is the word of the King.

"For you heaven has ordained happiness; do not, then, refuse to look upon those to whom bitterness and sorrow are appointed.

During the meal Nadia's first friend unfolded the girl's story, as she had heard it, to her cousin, and engaged her help in the matter of drawing up the petition. She was extremely sympathetic, and at once produced a pen and ink and some sheets of official paper from a hole under the thatch, which served apparently as her husband's bureau, and Nadia sat down to write at the small low table from which the breakfast things had been hastily removed. It was no easy matter to translate into good French the sonorous Thracian which her travelling-companion poured forth, to the admiration of the station-master's wife, and the latter complicated the matter almost at the beginning by exclaiming—

"Oh no, Maria! You must not mention the marriage, it would be most unfortunate. Haven't you heard the news?"

"News? What news?" cried Nadia and her friend together.

"Why, about the poor King. The engine-driver on the train from Bellaviste which passed through the station this morning told my husband. The wicked girl—for wicked she is, princess or no princess—whom he was going to marry went and ran off with some one else the very day before the betrothal!"

"I wish her husband joy of her!" said Nadia's friend, grimly. "A jilt like that will come to no good. After all, the poor young King is well rid of such a minx. But I was afraid you were going to say that something had happened to the King—and I see you were, too," she went on, looking at Nadia, who was pale and trembling. "That would have been bad for you; for Ivan Drakovics, good patriot that he is, is a man of iron, and would never listen to you, especially on a matter that touched the discipline

of the army. Well, we must change the words of the petition. Perhaps the poor King's heart will be softened by his trouble."

Awkward as the transposition of sentiment might appear, the Thracian poetess was equal to the occasion, and the petition was successfully drawn out, with its wording altered to correspond with the changed circumstances. After the first shock of surprise and unavoidable relief, Nadia wrote steadily on, without giving herself time to think. Not until she was again in the train, with the farewells of her kindly hostess ringing in her ears, did she venture to let herself remember that Caerleon was once more free, that there was now no one who had the right to stand between him and herself. She knew that she ought to feel sorry that such an excellent plan had failed, that such an indignity had been put upon Caerleon in the face of all Europe, but she was not. She was silently, unspeakably glad, and sat patiently all the morning listening to her companion's legends, putting in appropriate remarks at intervals, but entirely occupied with the spring of happiness which she felt bubbling up in her heart.

"You look better this morning," the good woman observed, complacently, as they neared Bellaviste. "No doubt it makes you feel more comfortable to have the written paper to depend upon in case you get flustered when you see his Majesty and can't say a word. That was how my Elisaveta felt when the War Minister's lady spoke to her one day at a military *fête*. Now be sure and let me hear how you get on. I wish you would come and eat some dinner with us, and let me take you afterwards to some place where his Majesty will be passing; but if you won't, you

won't. Only, if you are in any trouble, ask for the quarters of Serge Georgevics, and even if I am gone home, you will find Elisaveta there, and she will help you, for I am going to tell her all about you."

It was with difficulty that even on the platform at Bellaviste Nadia released herself from her kind friend, but when she had delivered the bundles she had been helping to carry into the charge of Sergeant Georgevics, who was there to meet his mother-in-law, and had again refused an invitation to dinner, she found herself free. She had ascertained from the sergeant that the King had already returned to the city, and was now receiving the Ministers at the palace, but that he would drive through the streets in the afternoon, that the townspeople might be gratified by a sight of him before he left the capital again for Tatarjé. She had still two hours to spare before she could hope to see him, and she walked restlessly about the quieter streets until she was tired, and then, fearing that she might be unable to perform her task, went into a modest restaurant for a cup of coffee and a roll. This frugal meal over, she made her way into the principal street, and waited with all the patience she could command until the appearance of bodies of troops and police showed that the King might soon be expected. In spite of M. Drakovics's failure to discover the nature of the plots hatched at Witska, he had learnt enough to make him anxious for the King's safety, and the road was to be lined on either side with mounted soldiers and gendarmes by way of precaution. Crowds of people gathered on the pavement, and the windows and house-tops were as closely packed with spectators as on the day when the King

had first entered his capital. The Thracians were resolved not only to demonstrate their sympathy with their monarch under the unpleasant circumstances of his return from the Mœsian frontier, but also to convey their appreciation of the diplomacy of his advisers. This might well be said to have succeeded, in spite of what had happened, in obtaining for them peace with honour, and hence no one who could possibly be out in the streets stayed at home. Nadia succeeded in maintaining a position in the front rank by dint of clinging to a lamp-post, and she peered anxiously between the soldiers to catch the first glimpse of the procession. At last the distant sound of mighty cheering arose, and she caught sight of the glittering helmets and breastplates of the escort. Now she must act. Loosing her hold of the lamp-post, she slipped in between the horses of the two mounted men nearest her and tried to press to the front. But strict orders had been given to allow no one to pass the guards, and the man on her right caught her shoulder and held her back.

"You can't go any further, my girl. If you want to see the King, stand still where you are, and you will get a splendid sight of him as he passes. You don't want to be introduced to him, do you?"

"I have a petition to present," she said, eagerly, disregarding the man's rough humour. "I must give it into his hand."

"A petition? Let me see it."

Nadia gave it to him, and he scrutinised it carefully, upside-down, from the "Nadia Mikhailovna" at the foot to the loyal address at the head, turned it over, smelt it, and handed it back to her. He could not even read sufficiently to know that it was not in Thracian, but he was satisfied that it was not

intended to convey any harm to the King.

"Yes, it's all right," he said. "You can throw it into the King's carriage as you stand there. Or, if you like, I will throw it for you, if you will thrust it into my hand just at the moment, so that the sergeant may not see."

"Oh no, I must give it to him," cried Nadia in a frenzy. The carriage was close at hand now, Caerleon in it, sitting with his face to the horses, Cyril and General Sertchaieff opposite him.

"But you can't," said the trooper, with a grim smile. What possessed her to do it Nadia could never afterwards determine, but she snatched out her dagger and struck at him. He parried the blow with the greatest ease, knocked the dagger out of her hand, and seized both her wrists in an iron grasp, crying—

"Help! Here's a woman trying to murder the King!"

"Holy Peter!" cried another, as Nadia struggled in vain to free herself. "Look at her white hands. She is a Scythian spy!"

"A Scythian spy!" said another voice. "Kill her, then!" An officer of the escort had forced his way into the group, about which the crowd was surging and shouting. Nadia became vaguely aware that the new-comer's face was familiar to her, that his eyes were like her mother's,—that he was her brother Louis. Madame O'Malachy's words recurred to her mind, "Louis will not allow you to spoil his plans," and as they did so, she saw that he had something in his hand. He raised it, and for one awful instant, which seemed an hour, she was looking down the barrel of a revolver. Her eyes were fixed on the little steel circle so close in front of them, but she saw Louis's finger moving to the

trigger, and a shrill scream of terror broke from her as she cowered back and raised her elbow to shield herself. The crack she was expecting came, and the crowd yelled excitedly, but the bullet sped harmlessly over her head, as the weapon was knocked up by the senior officer of the escort, who had caught her captor's agonised cry of "Accomplices, lieutenant! she may have accomplices!"

"You will return to the palace, Lieutenant O'Malachy, and consider yourself under arrest," said the captain, and Louis saluted, and backing his horse out of the group, rode away, followed by the cheers of the crowd, which seemed to approve of his endeavour to execute lynch law. But Nadia did not even look after him. She had seen, over the heads of the pushing and struggling people, who had forced their way past the guards and into the road, Caerleon spring up in the carriage and call to the coachman to stop, had seen Cyril throw himself out before his brother could get his foot on the step.

"Your Majesty wishes me to settle this matter for you?" he said imperatively, preventing Caerleon from descending.

"Good heavens, Cyril! don't you see that it's Nadia? I tell you I heard her voice. Let me pass!" But Cyril held his ground.

"Go on and leave me to settle things, unless you want to involve her and yourself in the biggest scandal that ever spread through Europe. It's for her sake, I tell you!"

"May I entreat his Majesty to continue his drive?" said an agitated commissary of police, thrusting his way to the front among the raging, roaring mass of people that had closed round the troopers and their prisoner. "The crowd are be-

ginning to believe that the assassin has accomplished her purpose, and the woman will be torn in pieces before we can get her to the prison, unless the King will drive on and show himself, and so distract their attention."

"Do you want her blood on your head?" cried Cyril, pushing his brother back into his place. "Go on, and let me see after her. I promise you I will take no steps without your leave. Drive on," he added to the coachman.

Angry and bewildered, Caerleon found himself carried on, past the seething crowd into which Cyril was now forcing his way, and between fresh rows of anxious spectators who had not been able to leave their places, so closely were they packed together, and who were necessarily a prey to the wildest rumours. They greeted the King with tumultuous cheers; and as the news spread, those who, being on the outskirts of the crowd, found it impossible to obtain a view of him, rushed to the churches and began to ring the bells, so that the drive continued in a perfect pandemonium of sound. Caerleon, bowing mechanically to right and left, and wondering what could have brought Nadia to Bellaviste, and where Cyril was taking her, could scarcely hear himself speak when he remembered that it would be polite to make some remark on what had happened to his companion. He looked across at General Sertchaieff, but started as his eyes fell upon his face, for it was pale and set, and like a mask.

"I am afraid this alarm has given you a shock, General?" he said, wondering whether the Minister for War suffered from heart-disease.

"Who would not be affected by

the attempt to perpetrate such a crime, sir?" returned General Sertchaieff. "Whom can we trust, when Scythia turns our peasant-girls into assassins? I know these women: they will dare everything and tell nothing."

"I hope you will find you are mistaken," said Caerleon. "I do not myself believe that it was an attempt at assassination at all."

Politeness forbade General Sertchaieff to dissent from his sovereign's opinion, but he shook his head sadly, and it was evident that the people were sharers in his view. Indeed, before Caerleon returned to the palace, it was commonly known in the city that the would-be assassin—a woman of extraordinary stature, and armed with three dynamite bombs, a dagger, and a couple of revolvers—had mounted the step of the carriage and dealt a stab at the King, which was only not fatal because the troopers had seized her and dragged her back just in time. In view of such a determined foe as this, it is not wonderful that the people thronged into the churches to return thanks for the King's escape, and that every loyal householder in Bellaviste devised and arranged marvellous impromptu illuminations for the evening with candles and oil-lamps. Cyril smiled grimly over the popular enthusiasm as he returned to the palace, and wondered impatiently how things were ever to be set right. Outside, the people were breathing out furious threats against the assassin; in the palace Caerleon was waiting in restless anxiety for news of her.

"Well, where is she?" he asked, eagerly, as Cyril came in.

"In the prison. We had to take her there,—the people were kicking up such a row," as Caerleon uttered an exclamation of horror; "but she is in the governor's house, treated

as a guest; and the governor's wife, rather a jolly old lady, but as deaf as a post,—which is an advantage under the circumstances,—is looking after her like a mother."

"But what brought her here?"

"She came to warn you of a plot. So far as I can judge—for she won't mention any names—that good-for-nothing father of hers intends to murder you to-morrow on the way to Tatarjé. Madame O'Malachy died the other day, and on her death-bed she let out the secret. Miss Nadia kept her own counsel, and started off here as soon as she could."

Caerleon drew a long breath. "Well," he said, triumphantly, "I hope you see now that it is positively incumbent on me to marry her. Think of her doing that to save me! She must care for me, after all."

"I was under the impression that she cared for you before, and refused you on conscientious grounds for the good of the kingdom," said Cyril.

"Oh yes, of course; but it's quite a different thing now. You must think me an utter cad if you imagine that I'm going to let her take this journey to save me, and get herself into awful trouble with her own people, and simply send her adrift again after it all. It's really the only thing to be done."

"It's a most unfortunate affair throughout," said Cyril, meditatively. "If you ask me, Caerleon, I say the only thing is to get her out of the city to-night, and hush the matter up. Just wait a moment, and listen to me. You may not know—I didn't want to bother you at the time—that very nasty reports got into the Scythian papers about you and her. The O'Malachys left Bellaviste hastily and in dudgeon, you

see, and the old man takes suddenly to expressing a deadly hatred of you, and talking big about the vengeance he will take for the way in which you have treated his daughter. The girl makes no sign, and all at once, hearing of your engagement to Princess Ottilie (for she must have started before it was known to be at an end), returns in disguise and attempts to murder you—that is how it will appear,—and all this simply confirms the reports."

"And I have brought all this upon her!" groaned Caerleon, aghast.

"I should have said that she had brought it upon you. But it's my firm impression that she knows as little about it as you did a minute ago. If she had known, she is not fool enough to have used that dagger as she did."

"I don't quite see why you tell me this. It makes no difference. Get out a special 'Gazette,' will you?—you're always issuing special 'Gazettes' for some reason or other—and tell the truth in it for once. Say why she came here, and—no, I'll draw it up myself."

"Caerleon, stop!" cried Cyril, anxiously, "and listen to me. You can't marry her in this way. No one would believe your story, and it would be said that you had married her as the price of her silence."

"Stuff!" said Caerleon, contemptuously. "I shall ask the Queen of Mœsia to invite her on a short visit, and that will put an end to these slanders. As for leaving her unprotected now, I won't think of it."

"Do you mean to marry her against her will?" asked Cyril.

"No, I shall see her and make her understand—not telling her anything of what you have said, of course. But I believe I could have

Miss Nadia decides to take the Trans-Continental express for Paveburg, or to go to stay at Eusebia preparatory to being transformed into the Queen of Thracia, we must get her out of the place before the people are about. I'll take Wright to drive, if you can spare him."

"Oh, very well. But what on earth is the good of all this fuss? Tell her that if she will only have me, we will be married as soon as we can get the British chaplain up here."

"Do keep cool," entreated Cyril. "In any case, I thought the lady always fixed the day?"

He left the room with a despairing groan from Caerleon in his ears, and made his way to the gaol for his interview with Nadia. He found her sitting with the wife of the governor, a pleasant-looking, white-haired old lady whom deafness appeared to condemn to perpetual speech. Cyril could hear her monotonous rambling voice as he came up the stairs, and it was not until he had written on a piece of paper that it was very important he should have an interview with Nadia Mikhailovna, that she withdrew to the chimney-corner and comparative silence. Nadia had laid aside her peasant's dress, which had been torn almost to rags in the rough handling she received from the crowd, and the old lady had lent her a black gown of her own, which was so much too large about the waist that it required to be kept in place by a sash. This gave her a kind of nun-like appearance, and she looked very tall and severe as she followed Cyril to the window.

"I suppose you have come to tell me what is to happen to me," she said, coldly, yet before his entrance the irony of the situation had almost made her laugh. To

have come all the way from Witska to save Caerleon, and then to be accused of trying to murder him!

"I am come to you with a message from my brother, which I have promised to deliver to you word for word," said Cyril. "If it had not been for your prohibition, he would be here himself now; or he would have written, but I refused to carry a letter. He implores you to reconsider your former determination, and to consent to marry him. He undertakes that there shall be no opposition to the match among the people, and he will regard it as the proudest day of his life if you will be crowned with him next month as Queen of Thracia." He paused for a moment, then went on. "I wish to keep my word to Caerleon, and so I will tell you that no one could be more delighted than he was at the rupture of his engagement to Princess Otilie of Moesia."

"Ah!" said Nadia, her eyes lighting; "and what do you advise me to do?"

"I don't presume to offer you any advice. If my advice was not in accordance with your wishes, I dare not hope you would follow it, and if it agreed with them, it would be unnecessary. I am so anxious to leave you quite unfettered that I will go so far as to say that I see no likelihood of my brother's taking the course which seems to me most advantageous to the kingdom, and making another attempt to ally himself with a royal house. He seems firm in his resolve to allow no one to occupy your place in his heart. I congratulate you on your triumph."

"I hate you!" cried Nadia, with fierce irrelevance. "If anything would make me marry Carlino, it would be the thought that I was spiting you in doing it."

Cyril shrugged his shoulders. "I hope that in any case I should behave politely to the lady who had honoured my brother with her hand," he said.

"No doubt," said Nadia, wearily. "But do you think I don't know how you would treat me if I married him? Don't be afraid—I am not going to accept his offer. Your conduct would be unexceptionable, no doubt, but the things you would say—the hints you would give—the way you would look at me! Whatever trouble came upon Thracia, you would make me understand that you considered it was due to me. I cannot see how you and Carlino can be brothers. He is so—and you are——"

"We seem to be both unspeakable, at any rate," said Cyril. "I said I wouldn't offer you any advice, and I won't. If I were an orator like Drakovics, I might discourse to you on the beauty of self-sacrifice, the necessity of sinking private affection for the good of the State, and other similarly beautiful sentiments. But being merely a man of the world, I can only say, marry Caerleon if you like, and be Queen of Thracia. No doubt you will be very happy until the next revolution comes. Or else leave him still free, and let him and the kingdom have a chance."

"I believe," said Nadia, slowly, "that you had rather that your brother had been killed than that he had been saved through me."

"Now you are excited," said Cyril, "and you say things you will be sorry for when you think them over. I might certainly wish that you had not chosen to warn him in such a quixotic—one might almost say theatrical—way. But that is a mere detail, an error of judgment, and does not really prejudice the fact, for which both he

and I must always remain grateful to you."

"Thank you," said Nadia. "After such a handsome acknowledgment, it is only fair for me to give you the satisfaction of hearing that I refuse absolutely to marry the King, and that I will leave Bellaviste as soon as you will allow me."

"I cannot pretend that I am not relieved by your decision," remarked Cyril, frankly. "Pray believe that I will do my best to settle the arrangements for your journey as much in accordance with your wishes as possible, although it will unfortunately be necessary to make the start very early in the morning, in order to avoid comments in the city. I propose, if you will allow me, to do myself the honour of accompanying you as far as Boloszjen——"

"Oh, why make all this fuss—this pretence of asking my permission?" asked Nadia, impatiently. "I know quite well that I am a prisoner, and must submit to whatever arrangements may be made for me by my gaolers."

"Excuse me," said Cyril, "but I understood that you were leaving Thracia of your own free will, and going to rejoin your friends? I think you will see that this is both a truer and a more agreeable way of looking at the matter. To return to our subject. The first part of the journey we must make by road, for it would not be advisable for you to take the train here. We will get on board at some country station, where none of us is likely to be recognised. Our good friend Madame Bruics here will accompany you as far as the Scythian frontier, and give you into the charge of Princess Soudaroff's lady-in-waiting."

"I am most grateful to you for



your kindness and consideration," said Nadia, rising to leave the room. "Perhaps you will tell Madame Bruics anything else you have to say. I am very tired."

"If your gratitude is to be interpreted by your looks, it is not the kind I care for," said Cyril to himself as she retired. It took some time to explain in writing to Madame Bruics what was required of her, but at last Cyril was able to leave the prison and return to the palace. Sending for Wright to give him his orders for the morrow, he found the groom bursting with importance and excitement.

"'Ave you 'eard, my lord, as 'ow Mr O'Malachy 'ave sloped?" he asked eagerly, as soon as the footman who had conducted him into Cyril's presence had departed.

"Sloped? Lieutenant O'Malachy?" cried Cyril, and cursed himself for a fool. Why had he not thought of ordering Louis's arrest instantly on hearing Nadia's story? He might have guessed that her father's plot needed a helper in the city to enable him to carry it out. "Is it certain that he is gone?" he asked of Wright.

"Quite certain, my lord. The capting's in a orful way about it, been rowin' the sergeants shameful, and one on 'em tell me. The capting, 'e put Mr O'Malachy under arrest for shootin' at the young lady, and tell 'im to come back 'ere. Contrairywise, 'e rides to the post-office, as bold as brass, and sends off a Government telegram to Mr Francis Xavier O'Reilly, at Tatarjé, orderin' 'im to leave the country within twenty-four hours. Then 'e rides out at one of the gates, sayin' as 'e's a-actin' aide-de-camp to 'is Majesty, and disappears. 'Is 'orse 'ave come back to 'is stable, but they say as Mr O'Malachy must 'ave 'ad a change of clothes 'id

away ready somewheres, and 'ave got away like that, though why 'e should want to is beyond me."

It was not beyond Cyril, for it was evident to him that Louis, expecting that Nadia would involve him in her disclosures, had seized the earliest opportunity for flight, a contingency against which he had carefully provided beforehand, and had, moreover, warned his father to escape from Tatarjé at least an hour before Cyril had telegraphed thither to arrest him. The loquacious Wright found himself dismissed somewhat hastily, with instructions to have the carriage ready at six in the morning; and Cyril turned from the unpleasant contemplation of the oversight of which he had been guilty to drafting the announcement which was to appear in a special 'Gazette' on the morrow and tranquillise the minds of the people. There had, he wrote, been some misconception as to the incident of the day. The supposed attempt to murder the King was not, as had been imagined, the outcome of a plot, but it was hoped that by its means the ramifications of a very extensive conspiracy had been laid bare. As for the young woman who had been arrested, she was not responsible for the intended crime, and having been found harmless, she had been restored to her friends. The last sentence pleased Cyril extremely, although he reminded himself as he read it through that he must keep the 'Gazette' out of Caerleon's way. His next duty was to write a full account of what had happened to M. Drakovics, who had remained on the frontier for an interview with the Premier of Mœsia, and to tell him all that he had succeeded in extracting from Nadia on the subject of the plot. This was not much, for she knew very little, and

she would not tell the whole of that, but there was one point which seemed to Cyril to be of considerable importance. Who was the X. of whom Madame O'Malachy had spoken to her husband, saying that he had been induced by bribes to join in the conspiracy, and to bring with him all the men in his employment? After much cogitation, Cyril could only guess that he was one of the large distillers whose trade had been spoiled by the temperance legislation of the present Government, and who would therefore be inclined to prefer another state of things. He resolved to keep an eye on persons of this class in future, and he told the Premier of his conjecture in order to see whether he agreed with him or not.

At the appointed hour the next morning, one of the royal carriages stopped before the door of the gaol, and Madame Bruics and Nadia came out and took their places. Cyril occupied the seat opposite them, acting, as Nadia felt, more as guard than as escort. Madame Bruics was fortunately sleepy and disinclined to talk, and they drove on in silence until they were oppo-

site the palace. With a sudden impulse Nadia bent forward and looked out—to see the place which held Caerleon. But when they came abreast of the small private gate, she started, for beside it there stood in the winter twilight a tall figure wrapped in a cloak. With a gasp Nadia realised that Caerleon was there,—that a word, a sign, would bring him to her, would end the long struggle in the way in which her heart ached for it to end.

"You see him?" whispered Cyril. "You will give in now, I know."

She turned away from him impatiently, feeling even then a mingled shame and surprise that she could choose to wring Caerleon's heart rather than allow his brother to triumph over her. Her eyes met Caerleon's, and he stepped forward eagerly. She looked into his face, saw its expression of earnest entreaty change to one of disappointment, and read in it that her decision was accepted, as it was given, in silence. She waved her hand to him as he drew back, the carriage passed on, and he was left standing by the roadside, without a word said.



THE NOVELS OF JOHN GALT.

MR CROCKETT was very happily inspired when he suggested a re-issue of the best of Galt's novels to the publishers, and they on their part have done full justice to the suggestion in an edition which is at once beautiful in form and moderate in price. To the readers of 'Maga' especially, the appearance of this new edition ought to be of interest. Three generations now have been winning the sixty volumes—the plays and tales and essays innumerable—which were Galt's literary output, until there are left only the six novels reissued here, and perhaps 'Lawrie Todd'; and most of these appeared in the pages of the 'Magazine,' or at any rate had its friendly send-off. And that is not all. At a distance of eighty years it may be allowable for us to recall that it was the editor of 'Maga' who discovered for the hither-and-thither writer his true province, and confirmed him in it. "It is due to Mr Blackwood," Galt wrote, "to ascribe to him the peculiarities of that production ['The Annals']; for although unacquainted with 'The Annals of the Parish,' his reception of my first contribution to his 'Magazine' of 'The Ayrshire Legatees' encouraged me to proceed with the manner in which it is composed, and thus, if there is any originality in my Scottish class of composition, he is entitled to be the first person who discovered it." In this reissue, therefore, and in the interest it has aroused, there is something in the

nature of a compliment to an old friend, at once pleasing to our knowledge of his worth and gratifying to our judgment in the early recognition of it.

It is not to those who feel thus, however,—they did not need the revival,—but to the present generation, which assuredly knew not its Galt, that this edition has given so great a delight. A great delight and a great surprise! To the generation of to-day, unacquainted with the literature its fathers read, the discovery by the inimitable art of Mr Barrie of the humour and pathos of life in Lowland Scotland seemed a new discovery, for prose at any rate. And thus to some the existence of Galt's earlier picture of the same life has come as a surprise, disconcerting them, as if a personal loyalty to the modern Scottish novelist were at stake in this claim of the earlier; and the 'Annals' and the 'Provost' have become a kind of a challenge, inciting some to lower their estimate of the modern work, and others to pitch it still higher, all apparently agreeing to seek in old and new a similarity, where in truth there is no similarity, but only a want of it. From that endeavour no knowledge of Galt at least can come. The uses of this comparison, which the fashion of the moment forces upon us now, if it has any uses at all, lie in its leading us to discriminate between his range and their range, between his attitude and method and theirs, the better to appreciate

how wide is the difference between them.

It is in their range, first and chiefly, that we must look for the difference. This edition of Galt, fixing, as we may hold, the verdict of eighty years, determines his place among our great novelists. It is an inadequate estimate of Galt, however, which considers him as a novelist merely, or as performing merely the ordinary functions of a novelist. Galt was far more, did far more. He was more than the chronicler of the various humours, civil and parochial, of the Scots Renaissance in the second half of the eighteenth century. He was its historian also.

If we are to understand all that is contained in this claim for Galt, the Renaissance itself must be understood. Its nature and extent have been strangely overlooked. With the Union, England brought to the Scots ideas and opportunities necessary for their further progress and development. These ideas, of course, afforded no new motive power to England, to whom they had long been familiar. And thus it was for Scotland alone (when she accepted them) that they were fresh and vivifying influences. Their effect, in bringing her into line with England, was to render their own workings of merely local interest, to be passed over by the historian whose business was a United Kingdom now. But the historian of Scotland cannot pass them over so. For here in Scotland, long before the general quickening of thought by the French Revolution, was a great national development; not a great spiritual Renaissance like that other, indeed, but one of far more importance to the people immediately concerned.

Consider the condition of Scotland in the middle of the eighteenth century. One has only to read Johnson's 'Journey to the Hebrides' or Fullarton's 'Agricultural Survey' to see that she had no commerce, no agriculture, as we understand them now. The pools of her social life lay, as they had lain for a century, undisturbed save for the sounds of war and rebellion that echoed over them. But in the second half of the century all was changed. The stagnant waters were stirred. Great tides of energy moved them. Capital, and the enterprise to use capital, both lying idle through the cessation of American trade during the War of Independence, were given the outlet now for which they had been waiting, by the mechanical inventions of a Compton, a Hargreaves, an Arkwright. Estates, grown wildernesses, passed out of the hands of decrepit families into those of new men with money and energy to work them. And the change was not material only—or, at least, the material change made a way for the aspirations which poverty had so long held back. The education which Scotland had enjoyed for generations found opportunity of action now; now was laid the democratic basis of Scottish literature which allowed the material development, so to speak, of a Hogg, a Leyden, a Carlyle. The people, conscious of a new independence, flung their arms wide to face the world; so that Burns, though he was not made by his environment, at least consorted with it, and is not to be considered, as most will have it, as a remarkable appearance in his generation, but rather as its fullest expression, a man who in the new relief rose with a great bound, his own spontaneity itself the reflec-

tion of the national wonder at the lifting of the horizon. Scotland was revived. In it, years before the French Revolution, the true battle-cry of that Revolution, as many think, was sounded—*La carrière ouverte aux talents!* As Mr Balwhidder says, "A new genius, as it were, had descended on the earth, and there was an erect and outlooking spirit abroad that was not to be satisfied with the taciturn regularity of ancient affairs."

"As Mr Balwhidder says,"—therein is the claim for Galt. For Micah Balwhidder and Provost Pawkie are the true chroniclers of all these changes and transmutations. Of the great Renaissance, the pulses of which we hear beating in Scotland still, Galt is the only, and a very adequate, historian.

Observation, a very genius of observation as we shall hope to show, was the root-quality of his work, as a historian no less than as a novelist. Apart from this gift of observation, however, there were conditions in his life which fitted him to be the historian of the Scotland of this Renaissance. He was at once of it and outside of it. He was born in 1779 and died in 1839, and these dates may be taken generally as the limits of the Renaissance period. And he was a true product of his country, typical of his times. The new energy that was throbbing in his country was throbbing in him. His life, as we know it, was an unceasing endeavour. Rhyming, music, mechanism, antiquarian research, volunteering, the bar, commerce, literature, colonisation,—there was no region of knowledge or accomplishment that he did not enter upon, master to some extent, write about voluminously. There is a passage in the 'Auto-

biography' which illustrates this singular energy of mind:—

"I was a sort of a fisher," he writes of his youth, "but never distinguished. The scene of my reveries was a considerable stream in the moors behind the mountains above the town. It has since been brought round the shoulder of the hill, and being dammed up, it now by a canal gives to the town a valuable water-power. Among my fishing dreams, this very improvement, in a different manner, was one of the earliest. I brought forth to myself a notable plan,—no other than to tunnel the mountain by the drain and lead it into the Shaws Water,—for exactly the same purpose as the canal has since been executed."

"In the Firth, opposite to Greenock, there is a large sandbank often dry at low water. When it was proposed to enlarge the harbour it occurred to me that this bank might be converted into land, and I have still a very cheap and feasible plan for gradually doing it, but unfortunately the bank belonged to the Crown, and was too sacred to be improved. In contriving schemes such as these my youth was spent, but they were all of too grand a calibre to obtain any attention, and I doubt if there yet be any one among my contemporaries capable of appreciating their importance."

There, was Galt running over with the new energy that filled Scotland. On the other hand, he spent the greater part of his life out of Scotland, travelling widely, mixing with men and women of all degrees, watching in their established order those great forces which in his own country were intermittent still, and uncontrolled. And thus he came to look upon Scotland from without also, with an eye trained to note change and the causes of change.

The Scotland of the Scottish writers of to-day is a Scotland nearer to us than Galt's; nevertheless, it is one far removed. And far removed in spirit rather

than in time. It would be true in a sense to say of Mr Barrie that he is of the Auld Lichts himself, learned in their ways and beliefs; but the world of Thrums is not to him what Gudetown and Dalmailing were to Galt. Gudetown and Dalmailing Galt had seen, and what we see of them is the dead-sure result of his observation. Not so the Thrums of the 'Auld Licht Idylls,' to Mr Barrie or to us. It has passed away; the generation that can remember it has passed away also; and what of it has been rescued for us is the fragments of that generation's reminiscences of it, restored and transmuted by Mr Barrie's art. So, with the other Scottish writers: their Scotland is a Scotland seen through the glass of pathetic and humorous reminiscence.

And here let us note, always as throwing light on Galt's range, that the present-day writers see their Scotland through still another glass, the spiritually idealising glass through which their readers demand that they shall look. For the modern novel of Scottish life has been, to a great extent, the manufacture and the property of a religious public: not wholly,—the genius and art of Mr Barrie have compelled a recognition far beyond it,—but to an extent that has influenced it greatly. That religious public must not be taken to represent religious Scotland, as the English reader may be led by the 'Bonnie Brier Bush' to believe. But the true stream of religious life in Scotland is lost to-day in the waters of "Kirkiness"—and drummer waters never were; and at the bidding of this too powerful religiosity, many of the modern writers have ignored something in Scottish life as real and characteristic in our day as in Galt's or

in Dunbar's: a materialism, as animalism, not entirely ignoble, but to be transformed by this spiritual emotion with which some present writers so wholly concern themselves that with them it becomes akin to the fugitive and cloistered virtue that aroused the grave and lofty scorn of Milton. And in this way, in the picture of a Scottish life which is nothing but spiritual, there is contained a half-truth, worse than a lie,—a triple lie, indeed, deceiving the writer and deceiving the reader and a libel on the life itself. Far otherwise it is with Galt, in whose work, always historically true, the spirituality of the people appears less, as, we may believe, in his day it showed less. He carries on the traditions of the vernacular literature, not missing the common or unclean, but painting a rounded and complete picture.

Thus, whatever it may lose by the absence of this idealism, Galt's work remains, as the present-day reminiscent and falsely spiritual writers' can never be, of value historically; and more, of a historical value that is maturing, being greater to us than to his contemporaries, and becoming greater still as the years go on. This is not because there is no truth in Mr Dishart, say, and others in Thrums, but because, howsoever true these may be, they are but facets of the whole truth. They may be true portraiture, but at any rate the Thrums that is compact of them is not a true picture. There never was a village like Thrums, there never was a glen like Drumtochty; whereas we are convinced that Dalmailing and Gudetown are the true Dalmailing and Gudetown of Galt's day, and at the same time the truest pictures we possess of the Scottish village and burgh-town of our day. And this is

because they were seen whole, complete, not only by a contemporary chronicler but by a chronicler who noted, with an observation that amounts to philosophic insight, the developmental forces beneath contemporary events.

This historic insight, which differentiates Galt from the writers of to-day who glorify a characteristic—the most noble and marked—of the Scottish people, also differentiates him from Scott, his great contemporary, who has painted this transition period. From the historical point of view Scott, too, is less valuable than Galt, and that just because he was far greater than Galt, his own mind being more to him, his subject less. Scott's novels of the Renaissance are not documents of it, as Galt's are. Even as he writes of the transition, he heightens, transmutes, by imaginative power; taking away from fact, as when he shows the breaking-up of feudalism in '45; inventing, not mirroring the plain fact, so that the character of Dandie Dinmont, the infinitely greater character, is less the real thing than Kebbuck or Coulter of the 'Annals.'

The 'Annals' and the 'Provost,' then, occupy a place of their own in our literature. In them local and parochial annals are informed with the dignity of philosophic history. Galt has interested us in Dalmailing or Gudetown because it is real, human, made up of men and women; and in the same presentment in which he does this, the emergent types come up so luminously, so wholly, that they are the nation in miniature. And to achieve dramatic history in this way, embodying the general in the particular, is, perhaps, what has been done by no one else.

Galt did not reach this singular position without some conscious

intention of achieving it. "To myself," he says, "the 'Annals' has ever been a kind of treatise on the history of Society in the West of Scotland during the reign of King George the Third; and when it was written I had no idea it would ever have been received as a novel. Fables are often a better way of illustrating abstract truths than philosophical reasoning, and it is in this class of compositions I would place the 'Annals of the Parish.'" That is interesting as showing that the author of the 'Annals' and the 'Provost' was a deliberate student of sociology. Nevertheless it is to be believed that his historic grasp owes little to the conscious intention, and almost all to a perfectly uncanny observation: uncanny, because outside of him, as it were, a thing by itself, working apart from him, so that he can stand aside and watch its operations.

Galt's observation discovers itself in such a contingent quality as his mastery of dialect. His mother, we know, had the command of an incomparable Scottish phraseology and a habit of queer metaphorical expression, to which, no doubt, we owe the rich excursions of the Luddy Grippy's tongue. The sayings of the carlins in Irvine closes, among whom he spent much of his youth, remembered after many years,—for of course his observation was compound of memory,—would find a place in his pages. In his slovenly fashion, he uses local variants of words—"Keelevin" and "Keelevine," for example—showing that these had been noted by him. At the same time, so keenly observed was it, his Scotch always is more than words and phrases recalled: it is an adequate speech, Mr Balwhidder's being exactly that of the old clerical fogie, Provost Pawkie's

exactly that of the consequential burgh dignitary. In its particularity, it is different from Scott's, Galt's, the observer's, being nearer the real thing. Sir Walter, on the other hand, not of the people but a man of birth and bookishness, always the gentleman, the fine romancer, gets a twang, an unmistakable something of style, unborn of observation, which makes his Scotch the greatest ever written. For Scott, writing by ear, and, without doubt, often led thereby into slovenly English, has informed his Scotch with a great style, coming at it by the feel of his finger-tips, himself smiling as he culled the racy idioms.

Of this tremendous observation, too, comes the sense of fine richness of material of which we are conscious in the 'Entail,' the 'Provost,' the 'Annals of the Parish.' There is no feeling there, as with so many jejune moderns, that heaven and earth have been ransacked to bombast out a book. Galt has not, like the decadent poet, the decadent novelist, cultivated his own mental emotions to produce the material of psychology. In the 'Annals,' besides Mr Balwhidder, and his three wives, and Mrs Malcolm and her family, and Lady Macadam,—leisurely, intimately discovered,—there are some fifty others, shown in thumb-nail sketches, each linked to inevitable, character-displaying incident, each incident, again, fitted with perfect relevance into the complete historic picture. In the 'Provost,' with

the same frugality of means to the end, the career of Mr Pawkie is laid bare, from his setting up in the corner-shop at the Cross, facing the Tolbooth, to his "going to his repose as a private citizen, with a very handsome silver cup, bearing an inscription in the Latin tongue, of the time he had been in the Council, Guildry, and Magistracy"; each body in the burgh-town—not a type amissing—impinging on that career, making it what it was, yet each true to himself; not an incident awaiting to develop it; not one present which does not also develop the larger progress of the municipal government "from the ancient, dexterous ways of corruption" to the order of "the purer spirit which the great mutations of the age had conjured into public affairs." And all this material was cast into these books with a generous hand by one who had attained to a fulness of knowledge, not through passion, not through reflection, but by a wide and penetrating observation.

An observation so wide and penetrating surely must have reached the springs of pathos and of humour. The verdict of three generations is that it has, and one wonders that any should deny either pathos or humour to the author of the "Execution" chapter in the 'Provost' and of the Leddy Grippy. Yet we know that there is something in Galt's presentation of these, even at their best, that causes them to fail in touching many readers of to-day.¹ Well, one can see how far behind

¹ Galt's humour was evidently to Carlyle's liking. In an article on "Carlyle in Society and at Home," Mr Venables says: "He [Carlyle] sometimes derived extreme amusement from the most extravagant forms of humour. In two or three days he repeated a dozen or a score of times, with bursts of inextinguishable laughter, a story which he had, I think, heard from Mr Tennyson, of some Scotch gentlemen who in the good old times had a three days' bout of steady drinking. Late on the third day one of the party, pointing to another, said to his neighbour, 'The laird looks unco gash.' 'Gash,' was the answer, 'he may weel look

the popular writers of our time Galt is in setting forth that observed humour and pathos popularly. The great mass of the reading public now is in the grip of the literature of Tit-bit—Tit-bit being not a class, but a method, applicable to any. News, even of the police court, must not lie in the column to be read for, but must be placarded in headlines; and so, be the matter what it may—regeneration of the human soul itself—focus it to some glittering point you must.¹ It is literary pemmican that the reader of to-day must have: in every sentence a *punctum saliens* of emotion or of wit. Galt is no author for such a reader. Yet, although he never forces the phrase, he is not behind the Tit-bitites in close and insistent interest. Only, where they explain, he presents; and so, in spite of the vulgar nature of his theme, in spite of the lack of artistic consciousness, he delights the cultivated reader, who will not abdicate his own powers of imagination and humour and emotion to become the passive recipient of what the author cares to prepare, babe to be fed with his spoonfuls, but asks that something shall be left for his own constructive faculty to do.

And, further, for a full appreciation of Galt, not only must the reader do much for himself—he must know much of himself also. If the 'Annals' and the 'Provost'

are not to be accounted merely as shedding light on burgh and country life in Scotland, if they are to be enjoyed to the full measure of their value as a revelation of it, the reader must himself be acquainted with that life as it is and as it was. He misses much if he is not being constantly surprised into a delighted recognition. English readers have laughed and cried over the pictures of Thrums,—and therein is a proof of Mr Barrie's genius; still, every Scot knows that there must have been lost to them much over which both to laugh and to cry. But this is far more true of the 'Annals' and the 'Provost'; not because Galt wrote of an older Scotland, not because he did not write for an English audience, but because he was more purely the observer and less the idealiser. With him, it is the life itself, not his presentation of it, that must move us; and how shall it move us utterly if we have not within us chords of association and memory? And not only does so appreciative a critic as Canon Ainger fail for want of these to sound Galt to the bottom, but among Scots themselves there is disagreement as to whether the 'Provost' or the 'Annals' is the greater work, each, according as he was bred in town or in country, making choice of the book in which he finds most of the life he knows.

In spite of these limitations to

gash, as he has been deid these twa days.' I heard the story for the last time as we came away from a house where we had been dining, and Carlyle must have surprised his fellow-passengers in a Chelsea omnibus which he entered before he had done laughing." The story, of course, is from the 'Last of the Lairds.'

¹ Mr Stead supplies a perfect illustration in vol. xxix. of the "Penny Poets." That accomplished server-up to the public insists that it was "little short of a high crime and misdemeanour" when Clough chose "The Bothie of Tober-na-vuolich" as the title of his poem, and, with a chuckle of prescience which the Tit-bitite must admire, he has reissued it as—"The Love Story of a Young Man"!

the number of his readers to-day, Galt still presents for most a wide range of humour and pathos: humour, subtle and gentle, as in the affairs of Micah Balwhidder, rich and shrewd, in the 'Provost,' roaring, often, there and in the 'Entail,' passing into excellent farce in the 'Last of the Laids'; and a pathos not less wide in its range.

We have spoken of Galt's lack of artistic consciousness as being likely to lessen for some readers their pleasure in his work. Galt, true product of his country, like it was untrained and immature. May we not say that there is in the Scottish character still, when set beside the English, something angular and intense, something almost fierce at times? In that most democratic of countries, we may explain it, the constant rush of new blood prevents the old from clarifying. Galt lived at a period when, as we have shown, Scotland was running riot in the new possibilities opened up for it. Think for a moment of his life; of the Greenock period, for example, with his fury in the pursuit of knowledge, his schemes of a calibre too grand for his contemporaries to appreciate, his lack of a standard whereby to judge himself and them. When he carried his pursuits and schemes into the greater world, even in that extended circle of his contemporaries there still were wanting any to appreciate him; while he himself was so deficient in a standard for judging them, that, with them all to choose from, he declared his young Greenock friend, Park, to be "far more accomplished than any other person I have ever known, and I do not except Lord Byron when I say so." It is an exhibition of an unwearied spirit in a good and honest and loyal man; but an exhibition also of immaturity, of a failure to shed

the amateur, of a "splainger," of the "gausy Greenock man," as Carlyle described him, getting beneath the externals with his intuitive flash. In his evident pride in such a character as his own Sir Andrew Wylie,—and see how he demeans Mary Cunningham by lowering her pride at the end, whereas she ought to have condescended to the Baronet even in marrying him,—we seem to detect a certain indelicacy of perception in Galt. Devoid of self-consciousness, and with a spirit the bearing strain of which was enormous, he was ready for any task, evidently more ambitious for the output than for a record without failure. He was the extensive, not the intensive, worker.

And thus he could never be the pure artist. He did not handle language lovingly, like an instrument. It was nothing in itself save a means to a practical end. His narrative, therefore, is often a slovenly march between the points where it is quickened by emotion. We do not remember that Mr R. L. Stevenson ever made a reference to Galt showing that he had studied him. The author of the Edinburgh scenes in the 'Wrecker' could not have read the 'Provost' without recognition of the great penetration there into the fastnesses of the Scottish nature. But, remembering the criticism in 'Memories and Portraits' of Sir Walter's shortcomings as a craftsman, one can imagine how Galt's slovenliness of artistic structure would strike the novelist who was for ever stripping his theme of irrelevancies. Take the 'Entail' as an example. The first part of the book is woven round the really great character of old Claud Walkinshaw. His death in the middle of the story is artistically



right: it was necessary that the effects of his entail should declare themselves most fully after his death of remorse for it. When Claud died, and this great central figure was removed, there was a gap, a barrenness, in the story which had to be filled, and Galt filled it with the Leddy Grippy. She is the great character of the second part. But this Leddy Grippy of the second part is not the Leddy Grippy, the Girzy Hypel, of the first. Galt had felt the artistic necessity of heightening the effect of Leddy Grippy, and to do so he changed her, but he did not revise the first part of the story, apparently did not feel the necessity of revising it, to bring the Leddy's character into a consequence throughout.

Galt was at once more and less artificial than Stevenson. His ideas, feelings, personal preferences, the matter, with all its side issues, as opposed to the manner, weighed more with him. Therein he was less artificial. On the other hand he was more artificial because he was infinitely less conscious than was Stevenson of the dignity of subject,—its demands to be treated with all respect and restraint, to be charged with nothing belittling to it, to be set upon a pinnacle alone, with all the petty accessories severely stripped. Thus in Galt we constantly find a certain familiarity between the writer and the reader: not a vulgar familiarity, but rather an understanding that, after all, this matter between them is at best only a story and the telling of it.

"But why should we expatiate on such particulars? Let the manners and virtues of the family speak for themselves, while we proceed to relate what ensued."

Can one imagine that, from the 'Entail,' in the 'Master of Ballantrae'?

Here again, however, Galt's observation came to his aid, making up for what was wanting in him of the artist. Extreme self-consciousness, extreme subject-consciousness, in art, are negative rather than positive qualities, showing themselves in what they keep out of a book rather than in what they put into it. Had Galt had these, we should not have known the Sandyfords. For want of the deliberative, lopping hand of the artist, the effect of the 'Entail,' which might have been his greatest book, is almost spoiled. But in the work of Galt that is great,—wheresoever, that is, his observation ranged free,—we do not miss the deliberative artist, although there, too, he is wanting. There is a deliberate art and there is an instinctive art; and whenever Galt is back in Greenock and in Irvine, his measure of instinctive art is full. He is like a man who has never been outside his own parish; when he crosses the march-dyke, he stumbles, loses his head, is forewandered: let him come again within the familiar circle, and he steps the road with confidence, never halting, yet never thinking of the way, because he knows every foot of it. It is this surefooted Galt that we find in the 'Annals,' in the 'Provost,' in great portions of the 'Entail,' in small portions of 'Sir Andrew Wylie,' in the 'Last of the Lairds.' There,—with what a tact!—Galt conforms his style to his subject, becoming softer, for example, when Micah Balwhidder tells about a Sabbath year of his ministry; by a fine instinct (which makes us like the man) writing gently of sunny landscapes, of grasses, of buds, of flowers:—

Willy took it out of his hand, and placed it on his sister himself, and then kneeling down, with his back towards her, closing his eyes, and shutting his ears with his hands, he saw not nor heard when she was launched into eternity.

"When the awful act was over, and the stir was for the magistrates to return and the body to be cut down, poor Willy rose, and without looking round, went down the steps of the scaffold; the multitude made a lane for him to pass, and he went on through them, hiding his face, and gaed straight out of the town. As for the mother, we were obligated, in the course of the same year, to drum her out of the town for stealing thirteen choppin bottles from William Gallon's, the vintner's, and selling them for whisky to Maggy Picken, that was tried at the same time for the reset."

There, certainly, is a great triumph of art for Galt's observation; and it had a greater. For the historic grasp to which it led him gave to the 'Annals' and to the 'Provost,' and not merely to special chapters in them, a structural quality. Micah Bälwhidder is content to record all things,—he was the minister of the parish,—Tam Pawkie has a bailie's eye for those things only that affected his personal policy; yet both the 'Annals' and the 'Provost' have a binding interest, the development of rural and municipal Scotland. No deliberative artist could have better created and sustained an atmosphere than Galt, by sheer observation and tact, has created and sustained it in the 'Annals'; Stevenson himself could not have been closer, more relevant, than Galt is in the 'Provost,'—and could he ever have been so adequate? Adequacy, arising out of the fulness of his observation, giving to each of these works its own large integrity,—therein,

rather than in the many contingent excellences discoverable in him, lies the greatness of Galt.

If it is in his rare observation that we find Galt's power, to it we must look for his weakness also. For Galt's achievement, great as it is, is not of the greatest. We are ever saying, as we read him, What a gift of seeing! ever, as we leave him, This is only seeing, after all! Between these two opinions our judgment keeps flying, now amazed at the great powers we discover in him, now conscious that the Something of greatness is wanting. And when we try, not indeed to recover this inexplicable Something, but to define our disappointment in Galt, we are brought back again to the quality of his observation.

Our constantly recurring wonder, as we read the 'Annals' and the 'Provost,' seems, if we consider it, to be less at a wide sweep of the human intellect than at a marvel of nature,—as if Galt's gift had been, say, a power of seeing objects with the naked eye at twice the distance at which other men can see them. This view of his observation as a power, almost freakish, working outside and beyond him, is borne out by what we know of it. It is singularly at variance with all the other qualities of his mind. Its working was confined to Scotland, we might almost say to Ayrshire. When he was in England, Galt could not observe at all; elsewhere in Scotland than in Greenock or Irvine, he invented—and invented atrociously. And even in Ayrshire, apparently, it existed only in his youth. He was over forty when he wrote the 'Annals' and the 'Provost,' and all that they contain, as the careful student of Galt might demonstrate, was the outcome of observation

MY FRIENDS WHO CYCLE.

THE startling announcement that the gigantic sum of £3,000,000 was to be paid for the Pneumatic Tyre Company, and that a new company was to be floated with a capitalisation of £5,000,000, in the place of the original company with its comparatively modest capital of £250,000, has created something like a revolution in the financial world. Many a speculator for a rise, who has hitherto confined his attention to South African and Westralian mines, and has made a study of assays and monthly crushings, will be prone henceforth to turn his attention to this new field for gambling, and to watch with more attention than heretofore the determination of our home-population to be up to date in fashions and recreations. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has already made his acknowledgments for no mean portion of his surplus of £6,000,000 to the mining markets: the signs of the times seem to point to the possibility that a boom in bicycling industries may provide him with a substantial contribution towards the hoped-for surplus in 1897. Whether in view of the abnormal increase in the number of bicycles either the present or some future Chancellor may conceive the audacious design of taxing a machine which is after all a luxury to one, if a necessity to another, moiety of riders; or whether either county or district councils, which seem to be respecters of persons to a less acute degree than Governments almost of necessity are, may find in a moderate impost on bicycles a way of tempering the wind to that shorn lamb the pedestrian ratepayer, who is condemned to pay the piper for the repair of

roads on which his personal safety is endangered and his nerves violently shaken by the vagaries of wheelmen,—these are questions beyond the scope of this paper.

Less sudden than what I have spoken of as a revolution in the financial world, but quite as marked, has been the entire change of popular feeling on the subject of bicycles; and by popular feeling I do not mean the feeling only of those thousands who have lately become converts—slow unwilling converts like myself many of them—to the art of cycling, but the feeling also of those sections of society who, though for various reasons unable to ride themselves, now tacitly approve of and encourage what a few years ago they condemned and abominaed.

“De Bruce! I rose with purpose dread
To speak my curse upon thy head;

O’ermastered yet by high behest,
I bless thee, and thou shalt be bless’d!”

As I read in a local paper not so very long ago a letter of thanks addressed by an elderly incumbent to his parishioners, who had subscribed to present him with a costly bicycle which he had yet to learn to ride, I was at a loss which to admire most,—whether the generosity of the parishioners in presenting the gift or the pluck of the recipient who had undertaken to use it. But then, as I thought of my own feelings a few years back toward cycles and cyclists, I began to wonder whether the old clergyman was at all in the position of the abbot in the ‘Lord of the Isles,’ and had been mastered not exactly by high behest but by the God or Goddess of Fashion, who so often coerces humanity into following its dic-

a whole week, after standing in the stable on Sunday, was so fresh on Monday morning that, after trying to run away, it jibbed so suddenly that the rider was thrown violently forward on to his face and received some severe contusions. Walter Raleigh's well-known verse—

"Fain would I climb but that I fear to fall"—

must have found a ready echo in the heart of many a beginner who has hopped for fifty yards along a road with one foot on the step of his machine, hesitating to make the final attempt to climb up from one side owing to a conviction grounded upon past experience that it would only be a prelude to tumbling off on the other. A lady, not overmuch troubled by nerves, described to me what a shock it was to her wifely feelings, when, having persuaded her husband, who had been sedulously practising in the garden, to make his first public trial on the high-road, on turning a corner round which he had of course after the manner of husbands preceded her, she saw nothing but his heels sticking up into the air out of a very deep ditch. There were fortunately no bones broken, and it is needless to say that it was entirely the fault of the machine, which had first shied across the road at the corner, then deliberately buck-jumped and kicked, and finally, having thrown the rider over its head into the ditch, had proceeded to sit down on the top of him. Indeed, if the gentleman's account is to be credited, that particular bicycle either had, for some days at all events, only one side to its mouth, or having at some period of its existence been ridden to the hounds, resented hammering along the hard high road, and not only attempted to jump the hedge

and ditch into the adjoining field on every possible opportunity, but, being a high-couraged animal, invariably selected for the attempt that side of the road where the ditch was deepest and muddiest, and the hedge thickest and most prickly. Times there were, again, when that self-willed machine would resolutely ignore all rules of the road, and as if suddenly acquiescing in the rider's desire to avoid hugging the hedge, would persist in occupying the middle of the road, and either decline to give way to any passing vehicle or attempt to force a passage on the wrong side. Had it not been for the stronger mind of the lady-rider, who was a perfect mistress of her machine, the gentleman would have given up the struggle at a very early period of his cycling career. For, after narrowly shaving the wheels of the first vehicle he attempted to pass, he dismounted, and, pale in the face and trembling in every limb, announced his determination of going home.

"Nonsense! Get up again and go on: you'll be all right presently," and the doubting Barak obeyed the edict of strong-minded Deborah, remounted, persevered, and in course of time became an accomplished cyclist.

Again, I met a man in the flesh not so very long ago, who, being of a sanguine temperament, after about a month's practice by daylight, conceived himself to be sufficiently advanced in the art to ride out to a dinner-party on a summer evening. As a result of this misplaced confidence, he appeared at the breakfast-table on the following morning with a wofully scratched face. He disclaimed having had any quarrel with the family cat, but accounted for his disfigurement by stating that his cycle had also dined out,

and—to use plain language—had made a beast of itself. He had found it in the course of his return journey by no means in the helpless, but rather in the foolhardy, stage of drunkenness, which had prompted it to perform sundry antics more dangerous than amusing. After shying at its own shadow in the road and playing the fool generally, it suddenly elected to attempt to jump a thick hedge, with disastrous results. The owner subsequently sold the machine to a German, who cured it by homœopathy, and it is now a reformed character. Its successor, in imitation of Alcibiades, one day elected to throw itself down flat in front of a heavy van, and having been trampled upon by a dray-horse and run over by the wheels of the van, took a good deal of repairing.

I have been told that it is not wholly advisable for a rider who has not attained a certain amount of proficiency to take out his watch and look at the time while riding a fresh machine. A friend of mine who made the experiment fell into dire disgrace with a wife and husband who were riding on either side of him. For the machine, finding itself temporarily master of the situation, manœuvred so skilfully that it upset first the lady and then the gentleman into their respective ditches. That the delinquent rider should have himself fallen on the top of the latter victim was a wholly unnecessary proceeding, as I have been informed by another of my friends who cycle. For he assures me that in the days of his pupilage in the art he managed to upset his mentor for the time being, a parson, into a ditch without suffering the least personal inconvenience.

Furthermore, it is a wise precaution, so many of my cycling friends

have assured me, to ride very slowly or even to dismount when passing through a village, where children and chickens, dogs and ducks, pigs and perambulators, and all other things that may be held to come under the category of *feræ domesticæ*, patrol the streets at pleasure. For some bicycles are of a gay and frivolous disposition, and delight to play with other animals, and as a bicycle's ideas of playing much resemble those of a goat, the results are often disastrous. Dogs are especially objectionable. Like the amiable hound against which Mr Quilp considerably cautioned Sampson Brass, they may live on the right hand, but sometimes hide on the left, ready for a spring, and many of them have a playful habit of attacking the comparatively unprotected calves of knickerbockered cyclists, and not always being good judges of pace, are apt to get run over by mistake, to the disconcertment of both parties. Commonly speaking, the dog gets the best of the transaction. The partiality displayed by these animals for bicyclists' calves is a strong argument, if any were wanting, against the adoption of the rational costume by lady-riders. Although cats are reputed to have nine lives, I am assured on good authority that an unhappy cat was instantaneously killed, and almost converted into sausages, when, being closely pursued by a dog, she attempted to rush through the wheel of a passing bicycle. As the rider of the machine took a severe fall, I cannot recommend this as a safe and convenient way of killing a cat, nor have I felt the least anxiety to accept the offer of a cycling friend, who suggested that just by way of experiment he should hunt the cat if I would ride the bicycle. Sheep are, I

am told, just as stupid about bicycles as they are about everything else that goes on wheels. A young lady in Devonshire riding down a grass slope came across a sheep which was lying down exactly in her way. Much to the consternation of her friends, who were watching the performance, she apparently attempted to jump the animal. Over rolled the trio, with the result that the bicycle was more or less damaged, the sheep's feelings were hurt, and the lady got a black eye.

"But why did you do it?" they asked her.

"I do it!" was the indignant reply; "I rang my bell as loud as I could, but the silly creature would not get out of the way."

From Peterborough about eighteen months ago a party of bicyclists started one morning to visit some churches in the neighbourhood. Several members of the party, which comprised an equal number of ladies and men, were comparative novices, and there was a little discussion as to the best method of marshalling the force. That they should all ride abreast seemed a convenient and sociable arrangement, and it was in this formation that most of the outward journey was accomplished. Then, however, the left-flank lady's machine kicked or jibbed or did something unexpected, the lady fell against her neighbour, and the whole party toppled over like a row of ninepins. Fortunately no great harm was done, but it was deemed advisable to reconsider their arrangement, and eventually it was decided that riding in single file would be a more secure, if less sociable, method of proceeding. It was in this formation that they commenced their return journey, and again all went on smoothly till the foremost rider encountered a flock of sheep. A really wise

man would under the circumstances have dismounted, but the gentleman in question scorned so timorous a line of action, and attempted to thread his way through the sheep, with the almost inevitable result that he came to grief. The lady rider who followed fell over her leader, and there ensued a scene which recalls the chariot-race described by Orestes:—

"Then order changed to ruin,
Car crushed on car; the wild Crissæan plain
Was sea-like strewed with wrecks."

For the wild Crissæan plain substitute a very dusty country road, and the reader can imagine the rest. For those who know the ways of sheep it is almost needless to add that the whole flock ran helter-skelter over their fallen adversaries, who swallowed a sufficient amount of Olympic dust to satisfy their cravings in that direction for a long time to come.

But to return more directly to my subject. I seem to have brought myself to a period when I had begun to regard bicycles and their riders with toleration. The final stamp of respectability was in my eyes affixed to cycling when I met an Eton master riding along the Slough road at a dignified pace, and with the air of a man who is very much in earnest. So intent indeed was he, and so entirely engrossed in the solemnity of the performance, that he looked neither to the right nor the left, and my wave of the hand passed as a sort of work of supererogation, and was absolutely lost upon him. I felt a little hurt at the time, as no man exactly likes to be cut dead, either on purpose or by accident, on the Queen's highway; but I have since heard it hinted that the apparent premeditation is not quite so real as

it looks, but is only assumed in virtue of the fact that to take off his hat, to nod, or even to look round by way of acknowledging the greeting, would infallibly upset the rider's equilibrium, and that he prefers the risk of quarrelling with his acquaintances to the chances of an ignominious spill.

And with this event ended the happy days of my innocence, and now, owing to the circumstance that many of my most intimate friends had become masters of the craft, I ceased to regard wheelmen with positive antipathy. I had rather learnt to tolerate than to envy.

Presently signs were not wanting that I was soon to see the war being carried into my own country. In the first place, my small daughter (*et al.* six), of whom it might at that advanced age be said with some truth that if her bodily presence was weak her pertinacity was by no means contemptible, received a letter from a fond bachelor uncle in Germany. Little dreaming of the heights to which it was possible for the young lady's ambition to soar, the rash man had inscribed the sentence, "Mind you write and tell me what present I am to bring you from Wiesbaden." Here, indeed, was at once a problem to be solved and a situation to be envied,—not merely an ordinary present from an ordinary uncle, but any present she liked to select from an uncle in foreign parts. The little girl we read of in moral tales would of course have written back to the effect that any present which "her own dear darling uncle" brought her would be equally acceptable, and a really well-brought-up and refined specimen girl of the nineteenth century would have chosen a German doll or a book. But the particular small atom who calls me father, being a very ordinary and

unregenerate atom, had apparently only been waiting for an opportunity to exercise her freedom of choice. About one trivial but not wholly unimportant detail, mere matter of orthography, her mind was not quite clear, and either being doubtful of the line that her mother would take, or having, unlike Rehoboam, more confidence in the judgment of elderly counsellors, she suddenly announced that she was going to consult her grandmother on important business. Armed with the letter, and wearing an air of great gravity, she sallied forth on her mission, escorted by her usual retinue of one nurse and two or three dogs.

"Grannie," she exclaimed, immediately on entering the drawing-room, "I want to ask you something very 'ticular."

"Well, darling, what is it?"

"Why, how do you spell bicycle?" and then came out the whole story how her uncle had told her to choose a present, and how she had always been longing to have a bicycle; how she meant to write the letter herself, because she was sure that her mother would substitute "ball" or "doll" or something stupid, and how the only difficulty was that she was not quite sure how to spell the word. The magic word was duly written down for her in large letters and consigned to her pocket. But alas! for the treachery of grannie who secretly passed on the story to the child's mother. This breach of good faith did not, as it happened, make much difference in the long-run. For the atom, not being much of a scribe, eventually enlisted her mother to act as amanuensis, previously extorting a promise that the word bicycle was not to be transmogrified. Whether the mother added a postscript or her own account is open to ques-

tion. But on the whole it was perhaps fortunate for the peace of the family that bicycles are not commonly registered as "made in Germany." For there is no knowing to what depths of besottedness a bachelor uncle's fondness for his one and only niece is capable of leading him.

At this time, I may remark, that had I ever entertained the most remote idea of joining the ranks of bicyclists, that idea would have been at once nipped in the bud by my better half, who had even stronger feelings on the subject than I had. Living as we did near the Bath road, some twenty miles out of London, on fine Sundays in the spring and summer months we naturally either met or were overtaken by hordes of London clerks and shop-boys, for whom we may charitably suppose that Sunday is the sole day in the week available for their favourite amusement. And I have no doubt that, having from observation come to the conclusion that "many bicyclists are Sabbath-breakers," she at once jumped, as feminine logicians are apt to jump, from the particular to the universal, and laid it down as a legitimate inference that "*all* bicyclists are Sabbath-breakers," and then possibly, still employing feminine logic, proceeded to convert this proposition into the still more damning formula, "*all* Sabbath-breakers are bicyclists." However, in course of time, when, like the rest of the world, she discovered that some of her male relations, connections, and personal friends had taken to the pursuit, she allowed herself to be educated into believing that it was possible for a male being to be a good Christian and ride a bicycle at the same time. And the fact that hard-working parish clergymen were seen to go about

their vocation on wheels finally completed her conversion so far as men were concerned. But all the bristles of virtuous indignation fairly stood erect when for the first time she met one of her own sex riding along the road. "Horrid creature!" was the mildest epithet that she applied to the unfortunate delinquent. There is no doubt the idea of a woman bestriding a bicycle—for I fancy that they did bestride them perforce a few years back, if they rode at all—was sufficiently shocking to many of the fair sex. For although it is an admitted fact that mankind is at all ages an animal with two legs, custom seems to have ordained that after a certain age girls should be supposed to have dispensed with such unnameable commodities as legs, much in the same fashion as the tadpole dispenses with its tail, and merely to have retained feet and ankles, to be displayed or hidden according to their shapelessness or unrepresentability. And now, in defiance of this edict of Mrs Grundy, this "horrid creature" was evidencing the circumstance of her unconventional bifurcation.

But a few months passed, and lo! the newspapers informed a rather sceptical public that the highest ladies of the land were patronising the bike, and in due course of time "horrid creatures" were no longer regarded as things beyond the pale of civilisation, but were merely criticised on the score of figure, get-up, and other points which it is the habit of the sex to notice.

Yet another year passed, and now it was a case of "*jam proximus ardet Ucalegon*." It is unfortunate that *proxima* would not scan, but it did so happen that this Ucalegon wore petticoats, and was not only what Mr Weller would have denominated a highly "wir-

cord my opinion that ladies' methods of dismounting are rather multifarious than uniformly graceful.

It need hardly be said that after this I joined the ranks of bicyclists myself. I had regarded my daughter's desire to possess a bike rather in the light of a passing fancy, as an instance, shall I say, of that possession of the bump of acquisitiveness which prompts her to require that I should at once purchase, for her own personal amusement, gratification, or edification, any stray dog, cat, lamb, or calf.

"I don't mind a bit, father. I don't want you to buy it for me out of your money; but I have got ten pounds of my own in the bank, and if you will only get it out for me I will buy it myself, and give up my puppy and my pony, and only love that dear little calf."

"But next year that calf will be a cow."

"Oh yes, and then it will have another little calf, and so I shall always have a calf to play with."

And in like manner she had doubtless expected that a little bicycle would either grow up with herself or else multiply and replenish the earth with smaller bicycles. The child's fancy, then, had not seriously disturbed me. But that my wife should not only have so far forsworn all her old-time antipathies as to meditate herself to play the rôle of a 'horrid creature,' but should actually have tried to steal a march upon me and learn as it were upon the sly, was altogether too much for my feelings. How was I to know that she would not go off biking with some other fellow, and leave me powerless to follow?

From that day I was possessed with a grim determination to learn the art at any cost. But, unlike the lady, I was oppressed by no feeling of false modesty, but rather

gloried in my shame, and announced to all who cared to know it that I had made up my mind to ride a bicycle. I learnt on a principle of my own which I can confidently recommend to beginners. I was helped on to my machine by a groom at one end of a gravel path, and after being fairly started, ordered the man to let go, and struck out manfully for a bush which was at the farther end of the same path. The bush, which was thick and thornless, was at once my goal and my buffer, and I felt a proud man when for the first time I charged it violently.

"Dimidium facti, qui bene cœpit, habet."

I argued to myself that a man who could ride thirty yards alone on Monday might hope to accomplish a mile on Tuesday, nor was I disappointed. When after some preliminary canter in the garden I ventured to take the road, I was so far advanced in the art that I neither felt myself impelled to throw myself into the hedge, as one man who had neglected to learn to dismount confessed that he was in early days fain to do whenever he met a cart. Nor again was I compelled to enlist the services of stray tramps and passers-by, which was the habit of another of my acquaintances who boldly sallied forth abroad at a period when he had mastered the science of dismounting but was absolutely unable to mount without assistance. Hitherto I have met with no startling adventures. I have neither charged a windmill like Don Quixote or a traction-engine like a more modern acquaintance, I have not been pulled out of a ditch by my wife or tried to clear a sheep like my Devonshire heroine, and I have turned a deaf ear to the suggestion that I should purchase a second-hand Sociable.

CAPTAIN FRANCIS LAWTON.

PART I.

ONE afternoon in the autumn of 1813 two gentlemen entered the cathedral of an English city, and halted within the threshold, looking from side to side with an air of curious scrutiny, which bespoke the fact that it was their first visit to the building. They were old men, and in their quaintly-made garments would have cut but sorry figures in our modern eyes, but they bore themselves bravely, as became officers in his Majesty's army, and in both there was an air of dignity which made the verger hasten towards them, in answer to the summons of an uplifted finger.

The strangers desired to be conducted to that part of the building in which a certain monument had been erected, and the verger's face brightened as he heard the request; for in his estimation the cathedral was his own, and all that was therein, and it pleased him well that visitors should come from afar to behold the most recently acquired of his treasures. The black-gowned figure shuffled forward, and the two old gentlemen followed, walking with careful, reverent footsteps. They were treading upon graves of brave and good men who had long since been gathered to their fathers; the wall beside them was covered with tablets which the action of time had faded to a dull brownish hue, but the eye was attracted by the gleam of stainless white marble in the distance; and it was at this spot that the verger drew up, before a monument which, both in size and in beauty of design, surpassed any which had yet been seen. The strangers were close behind him when he paused, but

there was a marked difference in the manner in which they greeted the object of their search. The elder of the two hung back a step, and there was a pained shrinking upon his face as of one who quails before a dreaded ordeal; the younger pulled his eyeglass from his fob, and hurried forward to read the words which were carved upon the marble scroll.

The inscription consisted of a eulogy upon the brave and unselfish life of one Captain Francis Lawton, who had lost his life in India while gallantly attempting to take a fortress from an overwhelming force of the enemy, and the art of the sculptor had given an added meaning to the words; for over the figure of the dying man, whose torn clothing and wounded body told the story of catastrophe and defeat, there stood an angel, with wings outspread, holding in her hands a victor's crown! It was a happy inspiration, for Francis Lawton had never appeared a greater hero in the eyes of his countrymen than when the news of the failure of his last enterprise sent a wail of lamentation through the length and breadth of the land. A nation's memory is, however, a fickle quality, and at the close of the nineteenth century it is necessary to recall to memory some historical facts, in order that the reader may understand the circumstances attending Captain Lawton's defeat.

The campaign in India which had as its object the relief of the Rajah of Travancore against the attacks of Tippoo Sultan, commenced in the middle of June

1790, and one of its first operations was the establishment of a secure and easy communication with the Carnatic, in order to bring forward the battering-train, and the supplies for the service of the troops. The Muglee Pass, by which the army had ascended the Ghauts, being too far to the northwards, and not sufficiently connected with posts, it became an object of great importance to dispossess the enemy of the Policode Pass, and of the hill-forts which commanded it. These forts were numerous, and the natural strength of their position made them in many instances appear almost inaccessible; nevertheless the army set itself resolutely to the attack, and started on the march towards Oussour with undaunted spirit.

Although the present campaign was in its infancy, Captain Lawton had already gained for himself a unique position in the service. Distinguished gallantry in one or two previous engagements had called him into public notice, but among his fellows he was even more renowned for a personal magnetism which made him the most popular officer in the force, and the idol of his battalion; while his wonderful hold over his men was so well recognised by the commander, that he was frequently chosen to undertake duties of a specially hazardous nature.

The army had marched some distance up the pass, and was about to advance to attack the fort of Kutnagheri, when it was discovered that there was a great want of water on the beaten road, and that it had the further disadvantage of passing within the range of the guns of the fortress. These, fired from the summit of a rock, could reach to a great distance and cause much damage;

while the approach of the troops being seen from afar, all preparations would naturally be made for a defence. Under these circumstances the army halted, and Captain Lawton was sent forward to reconnoitre in search of a safer route. He had under his command a company of men, and two lieutenants, and was empowered with authority either to halt or to advance and attack, according to his own discretion.

Some days later a messenger returned to the main body of the army bearing word that a path had been discovered, winding through the hills and woods, which, though unfit for an army or any large convoy, was yet eligible for a small detachment, and secure from observation. Captain Lawton was of the opinion that the best hope for success in storming the fort lay in a surprise under cover of darkness, when the force might be supposed to be much larger than it was in reality, and the *killedar* be alarmed into surrender by the rapidity and vigour of the attack, as had already happened more than once. He had therefore decided to follow the hill-road as far as possible, find a good position for watching the movements of the enemy, and there await his opportunity. He asked a certain time for the completion of his scheme, and when that time had elapsed the army advanced in confident expectation of success. The guns of the fortress were silent as they approached; but no English flag floated from the ramparts, and as the troops drew nearer they discovered with amazement and dismay that all that was left of the once mighty Kutnagheri was a deserted ruin. The enemy had abandoned their position, and, following their usual custom, had

blown up the solid bastions of the fort behind them so as to prevent its further possession, while of the captain and his men not a trace could be discovered.

The gravest fears were entertained, and a search-party was organised to explore the hill-paths, under the guidance of the messenger, who had originally been a member of the captain's company. For one long day they searched in vain, and then—in a thickly wooded gorge, within half a mile of the fortress itself—they came across the marks of a terrible struggle. Among the trees and rocks which blocked the narrow way lay a heap of dead bodies, many mutilated beyond recognition by the hands of the remorseless enemy; others exposed to the last indignity of having their bodies stripped, and left to furnish food for the birds of prey. It was evident that the captain's hiding-place had been discovered, and that, caught in a trap and surrounded on all sides, the little company had been cut down and utterly annihilated; and also that dread of the vengeance which would certainly follow had induced the enemy to abandon their position, and retire to a safe distance. In one sense, therefore, Captain Lawton had, after all, succeeded in clearing the way for his comrades; but in the opinion of men and officers alike, Kutnagheri was dearly bought at the cost of one of the most valued lives in the army.

The two strangers stood in silence before the monument, while passers-by came and went, casting curious glances at their pale absorbed faces.

"Ay! ay!" sighed the elder at length, "and so it all ends! Little Lawton! poor little Lawton!" for his thoughts had flown

back, and he was not thinking of the stalwart soldier, but of a curly-headed boy who had been his friend at Eton, the sharer and confidant of every youthful joy. He was getting an old man, and the days of his boyhood were clearer in memory than those of middle age; his eyes dimmed with tears, which were shed half for his friend and half for the days of youth—the merry glorious days which would never return again.

His friend looked at him with quiet understanding.

"Nay, not ends!" he said, gently. "It is impossible to limit the influence of a man like Lawton. The tone of the whole army is higher and purer to-day because he lived and died. It is the fashion to take dark views of things, and to think the worst of our fellow-creatures; but when one sees how ready men are to be fired by a fine example, it revives one's faith in human nature. It is there! the good is there, but it is often dormant for want of something to fan it into a flame. He lit the spark in many a breast. God bless him."

The other bent his head, and his lips moved as if in repetition of those last two words.

"Yes," he said, reflectively, "he had a wonderful power of drawing out the best that was in a man. He was an optimist, Huntly; that was the secret of it. He believed in his men, and expected great things of them, and his confidence inspired them to rise to the height of the occasion."

"That and his own splendid example. The man did not know the meaning of fear, Maurice. It was an unknown quantity. Such a nature is a grand inheritance."

"Perhaps so, but I will tell you what is grander. To know the meaning to the full, to have had

bitter experience of its power, and to have overcome it by sheer force of will. That was Lawton's case. You are mistaken in your estimate of his character, as were most people who made his acquaintance in later years. He was in reality of a timid nature, and his dread of physical pain amounted to absolute terror. The first years of school were torture to him, and our rough games a severe ordeal; yet he never shirked a dangerous duty, and the boy did not breathe who would have dared to call him coward! I remember one day, when he was staying with me in the holidays, we were fired with a desire to be tattooed, and engaged an old boatman to perform the operation. It was a very simple device which we chose—an anchor and our own initials; but I can see his face now as he stood watching me, waiting for his turn to come—white to the lips, and quivering with nervousness! We begged him to give it up, but no! he would not hear of such a thing, and held out his arm without flinching, though one could see that it was all he could do to keep from fainting more than once. He overcame his weakness to a certain extent as he grew older, but it was there all the same, and he must have had many a conflict with himself which none of his comrades suspected."

"I, for one, never did. Most men have an attack of nervousness now and then, especially before an engagement; but I imagined Lawton above all weakness. We used to call upon him to cheer us up."

"And he would do it, no doubt, and then go away and fight his own battle by himself. That was always his way. Well, I am glad to see how highly his townsfolk

appreciate him. It warms one's heart to find that he is not forgotten. Dear fellow! dear fellow!"

Reluctant as he had been to approach the spot consecrated to his friend's memory, Major Maurice now seemed even less inclined to leave it. He lingered behind his companion, and cast so many backward glances over his shoulder, that he failed to notice a small bent figure which was approaching along the aisle, and had hardly taken twenty steps forward when he came into violent collision with the stranger. The Major was a heavy man, and the newcomer slight and feeble in his gait; so it happened that his stick slipped from his grasp, and before the onlookers had time to realise his danger, he had fallen, a limp and helpless mass, upon the floor.

The Major uttered an exclamation of dismay, and with the assistance of the verger lifted the stranger and seated him upon a chair which was close at hand. He was an old man, and presented a pitiable spectacle when contrasted with the two officers with their air of dignity and wellbeing. His clothes, though clean and whole, bore marks of the extreme of poverty; his frame was shrunken until it was scarcely larger than that of a child, and his hair hung in masses round a skeleton face, in which the outline of the skull and the jaw were painfully apparent. So deathlike indeed did he appear at the moment, that the Major was seriously alarmed, and would have hurried off in search of a doctor had not the verger reassured him.

"He will be better in a moment, sir. He is just a bit shaken with the fall. You don't look very hale at the best of times, do you, Johnson? The gentleman is

afraid that he has hurt you, but you will be none the worse after a little rest, will you now?"

The old man stared dumbly in the Major's face, but he waved his hand as if entreating to be left in peace, and the verger fell back a few paces and continued his explanations in a lowered voice.

"No need to be frightened by his appearance, sir. He looks very little different at the best of times. He isn't long for this world, and that's the truth of it. He lodges with some friends of mine close at hand, and I see a good deal of him, for he spends half his time in the cathedral. He's a kind of fancy for that monument you've been looking at—sit and stare at it by the hour together, he will, without ever stirring, as if he were a stone image himself! It's a pretty thing too—I like to look at it myself, and I've heard visitors say that they have never seen anything to beat the expression on the angel's face. Perhaps it comforts him, poor old chap—thinking of what's coming. He's been a sailor in his day, and has saved a little money—enough to keep him going as long as he will last."

The Major listened, his brow puckered with anxiety.

"I shall never forgive myself if my carelessness has any bad results. He looks shockingly ill! I must speak to him again before I go. There is something I should like to say."

He stepped forward and laid his hand upon the old man's arm. It pained him to note how he shrank at the touch, as if he were little in the habit of ex-

pecting kindness from his fellow-creatures.

"I am distressed at the results of my own carelessness," he said, gently. "Your good friend, the verger here, will look after you for the present; but I shall be staying in the city for some days, and if you are any the worse for your fall, I trust that you will let me know, and allow me the satisfaction of serving you in any way that is in my power. A message to Major Maurice at the Crown Inn will be sure to find me, and I will come in person to answer it."

He paused, but though the sunken eyes were gazing fixedly at him, there was no glimmer of comprehension upon the face to show that the meaning of his words had penetrated to the brain; and though he stood waiting for several moments, there was no attempt at an answer.

The Major straightened himself with a sigh, and turned back to the verger.

"Well," he said, "I must just leave him in your hands. Send for me if he is ill or in need of assistance. In the meantime——"

"He is well cared for, sir. They are decent people where he lives, and will do what is right by him. I will give them your message, and if anything goes wrong you shall hear about it."

"Come then, Huntly! We can do no more. Let us get away from here."

Major Maurice dropped a coin into the verger's hand and hurried towards the doorway. The incidents of the past few minutes had shaken his nerves. He heaved a sigh of relief upon regaining the fresh outer air.

PART II.

It was three days later that the Major received the summons which he had been dreading. He was seated in his private sitting-room, enjoying the first fire of the season, when there came a tap at the door, and a stranger entered, in whom he instantly recognised the verger of the cathedral. He brought a message that the old man had taken to bed on the evening of the accident, and had failed so rapidly during the intervening days that the doctor had pronounced it impossible that he could live through another night. He had expressed a wish to see Major Maurice, and the messenger had come in haste, as no time was to be wasted if he were to be found alive.

Unspeakably distressed, the Major followed his guide through a labyrinth of narrow streets, until they reached their destination, and ascending a narrow wooden staircase, found themselves in the attic bedroom in which the dying man lay.

The breath of winter was in the air, nevertheless the window was thrown wide open, and the patient had only one thin sheet by way of covering as he lay propped up against his pillows. It did not need a practised eye to see that his hours of life were numbered; but his eyes were fixed upon the doorway, and an expression of unspeakable relief passed over his face as the Major entered. All the taciturnity of a few days before had disappeared, and he was now so anxious to speak that he would not pause to listen to the other's earnest words of regret.

"No, no! It is not your doing. I was doomed before then,—or if you have hastened the end by a few weeks, what then? You

have done me the greatest service that was in any man's power to pay. But now I have something to say to you. Send them all away and shut the door. I must speak to you by yourself for a few minutes." Then, as the verger and the woman of the house left the room, "The doctor tells me that I shall not live until the morning," he continued, feebly. "He asked me if I would like to see a clergyman, and I told him no. I have confessed my sins to God, and I want no man to act as go-between. But there is a weight upon me,—a heavy weight,—and there is only one man in the world to whom I can unburden my soul. That man is yourself!"

The Major drew back with a start of intensest astonishment, and for several moments the two men gazed steadily at each other, while the tick of the little clock sounded clearly through the silence. The eyes of the dying man were full of wistful questioning, but in the face above him there was no shadow of recognition—nothing but blank bewilderment and surprise.

"No," he sighed, wearily, "you don't remember me—I never imagined that you would—but you knew me once. It is a long time ago— You remember the summer of 1790, when you were serving under Lord Cornwallis in India, —when you set off on the march to Oussour and the——"

"Yes, yes, of course! And you were with us then? You were one of my men? My poor fellow, why did you not tell me before? And you recognised me the other day, even before hearing my name! Well, I am less altered than you, no doubt—no praise to me! And

what have you been doing with yourself ever since? You have had your pension, of course?"

The man waved his hand feebly.

"I am coming to that. I will tell you all by-and-bye. Sit down beside me. It is getting difficult to speak, and I have so much to say—— Yes, I was with the army, but I was not of your men—— Oussour was garrisoned, and we moved nearer the pass. Kutnagheri lay before us. It was a small fort compared with others which we had taken, but the position made it difficult to approach. The road was exposed, and there was a want of water—— A—— a company was sent forward."

"Yes! yes!" The Major's eyes were alight with eagerness, and he leant over the bed, as if fearful of losing one of the faintly-uttered words. "To find another road! I remember perfectly,—of course I remember. Well?"

"A company of men and three officers,—two lieutenants and the captain. He was your friend; you were always together. That is why I speak to you now—— It was a difficult errand. The country was wild, and once off the beaten track there was constant danger of a surprise; but there was a hill-path, and after a long search we——"

"We?" The Major started violently, and the blood rushed to his face. "You mean to say that you were there,—that you were one of Lawton's men! And you escaped! We thought that every man of you had been cut to pieces. You escaped! You saw the last of him and can tell me how it came about! You were surprised, of course; but how did it happen that you——" He stopped short as a sudden terrible suspicion flashed across his brain. Had there

been a traitor in the midst of that gallant company?—a man so base that for the sake of his own safety he had been willing to betray not only his own companions, but the most beloved and popular leader in the English army? As the thought passed through his mind he drew himself back from the bed, so that the clothing might not touch him where he sat, and his face hardened into the likeness of an iron mask.

The change of expression was too eloquent to be misunderstood, and the sick man winced before it as in sudden pain.

"Don't judge me yet!" he pleaded, "not yet—until you have heard my story. I will tell you all—— We followed the path until it ended, and hid ourselves among the rocks and trees. The fort was half a mile distant, and at night scouts were sent out to reconnoitre. The information which they brought back was insufficient; time pressed, and the captain was impatient. Then—I had done good service before, and they trusted me—— I went out, with two others! We separated, and crept along, hiding behind the trees and bushes—nearer and nearer—until suddenly—in a moment as it were—I found myself surrounded. It was dark, and the wind was high—I had heard no movement. They carried me back to the fort, and then—for they knew what my presence meant—they would have me tell the number and position of our men. I refused! Oh yes, do not scorn me too soon—I refused! If it had been a choice between that and death I would have stood while every man among them fired upon me, and have been thankful—thankful! I had been a soldier all my life, and had faced many dangers. It was not death that I

feared, but,"—the weak voice shrilled with agony,—"*they tortured me!* Do you know what that means, you who sit here calm and comfortable, and despise me for my weakness? The touch of the burning iron, the wrench of limb from limb? Oh, my God! a man is not himself—he is mad! how can he be answerable? I told all—all! I lay there bound hand and foot, waiting until they should prove the truth of my words. If I lied, I should pay the price; if not, my life should be my reward. You know the rest. For me, I was sent up among the mountains and kept a prisoner, but by-and-bye I had greater liberty. I could be of use to them in many ways; they sent for me to doctor them in their sicknesses, and I was free to go about from place to place. But when the years had passed on, it began to burn within me—the longing to come home, to tread on English ground, to see English faces, and hear the dear familiar words again before I died. It grew and grew until I could fight against it no longer, and I worked my way across the country, trading with the natives as I went, until I reached the big towns. Then I saw my face for the first time for nearly twenty years, and it was as the face of a stranger. I had been saving all this time, and had enough money laid by to bring me home, and to keep me from actual starvation. I came back to the old country, but the hunger was still in my heart—I could not ease it. I drifted to this city, and have remained here ever since. You would never guess what is the attraction which keeps me here! It is that monument in the Cathedral! I have spent hours of every day gazing at it. It breaks my heart, and yet—it comforts me!

I look at the angel's face as she bends over the dying man, and I read the words which they have carved upon the marble, and I know that they are—true!"

"True, indeed!" replied the Major, bitterly. "If *that* thought comforts you, lay it to your soul that you have killed one of nature's noblest gentlemen. A man who spent his life in the service of others, whose memory is sweet in the minds of his friends until this day—ay, and whose influence is strong within their hearts, though it is twenty years since those black brutes shed his blood!"

The grey hue of death was spreading over the old man's features, but, as he listened to the Major's words, his face lit up with a smile of ecstatic happiness. He clasped his hands together, and his lips moved as if in prayer. "Thank God!" he cried—"thank God for those words! Then he did not lose everything—— It was a sad ending, but he did not lose everything—— God knows all, and He will remember—He will remember——!"

His voice died away in inarticulate murmurings, and for a few moments the Major believed that consciousness had left him; but presently the closed eyes opened, and he spoke again in a tone of great sweetness.

"It is coming very near. In a few minutes I shall be with God, and He will judge me; but you were his friend—— I think I could die in peace, if you could say that you forgive me!"

The Major hesitated. Horror of that sin which a soldier is taught to count the worst of all was strong upon him even at this solemn moment. He looked into the wistful face, and for a moment he wavered; then the re-

membrance of that awful scene at Kutnagheri swept over him once more, he thought of a hundred homes left desolate, of a gallant life cut short in its prime, and sprang to his feet with a gesture of aversion.

"No, never! I cannot say it. It would be a lie. How could any honest man overlook such a sin?—Judas!"

The sufferer drew in his breath with painful inhalation.

"No, no—not that!" he cried, and his voice was as a wail of agony. "Not Judas—only Peter. Peter, whose enemy overcame him in an hour of weakness; who denied his Master, and then gave his life for the cause; who played the coward's part, and then went out into the darkness and wept bitterly—my God, bitterly!"

No pen could describe the intonation of that last word. A broken heart breathed through it with irresistible eloquence, and at the sound the eyes which had been bright with anger melted into sudden tears. It was only a moment as we measure time; but in that moment the Major had time to remember many things—moments of weakness when the right had not conquered; secret sins unsuspected by the world, perhaps also unrepented; his own need of pardon and the divine forgiveness, which of old had transformed a vacillating disciple into the rock

of the Church. A great wave of tenderness and pity filled his heart; he lifted the wasted hand and held it in a warm close pressure.

"Forgive me, my poor fellow, for my hardness of heart. Who am I that I should condemn you! If it will comfort you in the slightest degree to receive my pardon, you have it—full and unstinted. And may the Lord have mercy upon your soul!"

The sunken eyes were raised to his; there was in them a shining depth of love, such as he had never seen upon a human face. The next moment they closed, and the last flickering breaths of life came from between the parted lips. The Major tightened his grasp of the hand which he held between his own, so that while consciousness remained, the traveller into the great unknown might feel the presence of a comrade by his side; and when the peace of death was upon the still face, he laid it gently down, stretched at full length upon the sheet.

The next moment he fell back against the bedpost, and though the chilly wind still blew into the chamber, the sweat stood in beads upon his forehead. The sleeve of the night-shirt had fallen back from the dead man's arm, and upon the emaciated wrist was engraven an old tattoo-mark—an anchor and the initials "F. L."

THE LOOKER-ON.

IT is no doubt a dispensation of providence, and a fine thing for all of us, those who look on as well as those who enjoy, that there should be a Season to brighten up everything, from the shop fronts to the ladies' dresses, and form the high light in the otherwise low colour of the human landscape, which would be too intolerably grey if it were not that there is always a new crowd coming forward to whom life is a novelty, and always a lingering touch of hope in the most staid of observers that, though there is nothing new under the sun, yet by chance, by good fortune, there may this time be something with at least a *faux air* of the unexpected in life. The oft-repeated performance will no doubt appear just as monotonous as all the rest when it is over, but in the meantime it is a fresh canvas, which is one of the things, we believe, which fills the artist's bosom with the most pleasurable excitement. Upon that snowy blank—who knows?—the masterpiece for which we are all waiting may come into being, and even the remote possibility of it is a thing to brighten the eyes and quicken the pulse. We have the gratification also of thinking to-day that there has rarely been a time when so much was happening, or likely to happen. The last six months has been more full of surprises, we flatter ourselves, than almost any other six months we can remember. This great empire has stood, as it were, balancing on one foot in the midst of the Universe, with the rest of the world looking on, amiably desirous of seeing the other placed on a volcano, with an explosion

loud enough and great enough to shake heaven and earth. The rest of the world, we are happy to say, has been disappointed up to this moment; but that is not to say that the excitement of the position has been without its effect.

It is a curious question to ask whether times of great public excitement are favourable or not to what we call, as if in opposition to any such idea, the arts of peace. Are there more or less songs sung, dramas played, books written, and pictures painted in quiet than in agitated times? The Looker-on is not fond of conclusions: he prefers—for otherwise, indeed, what would be the use of him?—to play with such a question than to attempt to decide it. Should he let loose his opinion, which is always a dangerous thing, he would be disposed to suggest that excitement creates a taste for excitement, and that the more we are startled and stirred up by actual events the more likely we are to desire a continuance of sensation all round, and the more ready to be affected by every kind of moving influence. When the tide of being is quickened from any cause, its flow is stronger in all channels. It is quite a light, and perhaps almost flippant, view of the question to consider whether, in view of the greatest happiness of the greatest number, any public calamity is not a pleasurable incident to a much larger circle of persons than those who are affected fatally or even painfully by it. If not the gaiety, yet the entertainment, the interest, of nations is no doubt promoted by moving events, by those big occurrences, almost always tragical, which are

like a larger kind of story-telling to the world. When an armed adventurer rides—was it out of the sixteenth century?—over his borders into an apparently peaceful country, and sets the whole balance of empire quivering, is not the harm he does, and all its consequences, virtually counterbalanced by the extraordinary diversion he has given to all kinds and conditions of men? Was there ever play equal to it, or affecting so prodigious an audience? A hundred Colosseums full would not equal the amount of spectators who have watched, breathless, every act in the short drama. We have risen up more lightly in the morning for thought of the newspaper on the breakfast-table ready to thrill our nerves with a new scene, and got through the monotony of the afternoon looking forward to the renewed sensation which the evening journals were sure to bring. Nay, more, it has quickened all our mental qualities, given scope for powers of analysis, and discrimination into motive which we are astonished to find we possess. "Is there anything more about So-and-so? What do you think of So-and-so? What could be his inducement? What made him do this or that? How was he led into it? What did he expect to gain by it?" Is not the man who causes such a quickening of faculty a true benefactor of men according to the principle which calls itself utilitarian? a few troopers killed at one end of the chain, but all the world startled into mental activity, interest, and excitement at the other. Why, even to the Colonial Office it must have done all the good in the world. Imagine the high excitement of the midnight watchers, the strain of faculty hung on the tingling of a

wire, the immense opportunity of the Chief, the breathless interest of the subordinates! As good as a play! but much better than the best of plays, a new meaning, a new sensation to the world.

This large preponderance of the number of persons amused over those who are injured, which ought to commend such a question to the Utilitarian, is no doubt an effect of the noble system of news-collecting which we are every day called upon to admire, and the unexampled enterprise and energy of the press. Although I am not perhaps enthusiastic in respect to them, I am, like all idle men, a great reader of the newspapers. I like to follow a scrap of information from its beginning, and note the alterations it goes through, the sleight of hand with which it is tossed from one side to another, the repetition which fixes it in spite of himself upon the mind of the reader. It is Thackeray, I think, who comments upon the horror of sitting down before a blank sheet of paper with the knowledge that you must fill it somehow, and not an idea in your head how to do it. But to contemplate the great blank of an entire newspaper with the sense that, good or bad, it has to be filled with something before a certain hour, must be still more appalling. The editor is a great man: he writes his leader, and assures the public of every important measure of Government that "this is what we have always pointed out as the sole solution of the difficulty"; and of every new alarm that "for a long time past we have been warning the public of danger from this quarter"; which are easy statements, and no doubt satisfactory to himself: but meanwhile in the background the anxious machinery is working, and officials less im-

portant are wondering how on earth the columns are to be filled up. How they must long for events, these unseen laborious folk!—that some one of our amiable neighbours might declare war with us between ten and twelve of the clock, be it full noon or midnight; that there might be a massacre somewhere, or an explosion, or that some distinguished person might commit suicide (or any other crime): or that at least a very horrible murder might occur about these hours of night or day! These must be godsend, however, only to be hoped for now and then.

But failing anything so satisfactory, what a boon and a blessing to the newspaper are the public personages who are so good as to move about a good deal and keep a little rill of copy flowing. Some time ago it was one of our daily diversions to trace the movements of a certain ambassador and his wife who were apparently restless persons and always on the go. We have read so often that Sir E. and Lady M. S. had returned to England on leave of absence, or that they had gone back to their post, or that they had given a banquet, or attended a bazaar, or patronised the opera, or taken the cure at a bath, that the occasion of the retirement of these public benefactors came with a chill to our hearts! We felt ourselves left out in the cold when we could no longer read a dozen times in a week what these busy people were doing. Were they subsidised by the papers? or was it pure Christian charity and a benevolent interest in the amusement of their neighbours which made them move about so valiantly? But however it was, we miss them; and no doubt the newspapers miss them still more.

It is a wonderful instance of the ingratitude of the world that there are journalists who are republicans, for surely there is no institution like a royal family for the newspapers. Half the paper, one might say, is made up by them when the royal party is numerous, as is happily the case in this favoured land. When they marry and are given in marriage, when, alas! like meaner mortals, they die, when they add as they have done so liberally to the existing number of princes and princesses, the anxious editor may allow himself a breathing-time. And the great thing is that there is always something doing in that august race, which is actually one race all over Christendom, so connected is it by cousinships and marriages. A little while ago what a benediction were the obsequies of the Ozar: and now that a new Czar is going to be crowned, our friends of the daily journals may safely go to bed, or indulge in a lengthened holiday. Their work is done for them. Every incident of the great occurrence will bear repeating two or three times at least, to say nothing of the jewels, the embroideries, the decorations of every kind over which the British reader will gloat, and the political surmises which may be hazarded in consequence of the precedence in a procession, or the arrangement of the guests at table. We made perhaps a little mistake last time as we watched the important position taken by the Prince of Wales through all the lugubrious show, and believed that the big Russian bear had turned into a delightful Astrakhan lamb, all curls and pleasantness, to be carressed and applauded. That evidently was a mistake, as things have turned out; but it is one that will not, we may hope, occur

again; and in the meantime it is exhilarating to think of the columns that will be filled, the labour that will be saved.

At the same time, we must all allow that the papers are the enemies of books, and there is some danger that literature may eventually be swallowed up by journalism if we do not take all the greater care. A curious instance of this danger came under our eyes the other day, and that not where we should look for it, in the heart of the commercial community, but a very different quarter. In one of the greatest of the public schools, a remnant of faint regard for English literature had been cherished by a literary society, which occasionally invited eminent literary persons to discourse upon their several subjects. But lately, after a lapse of years, an old pupil was present at one of these lectures, the subject of which was a great author of the past century. He remarked with surprise the coldness or more than coldness of the schoolboy audience, whom he remembered to have seen responsive and delighted with Mr Ruskin's charming perversities and Mr Gladstone's fine periods and supreme distinction (it was in the ante-Home-Rule age), and even to the halting delivery and unpopular manner of Mr Matthew Arnold. "What could you expect?" said a young master, the freshest flower of the prize-lists, as becomes a member of that corporation; "who cares for Pope [it might be Pope, or Swift, or I know not whom]? It is absurd to discuss such persons here." "What then would you have discussed?" said the surprised critic. "The topics of the day," said the scholastic hero.

Now we all remember that a

very eminent person once asserted, with the full courage of his opinion, that an article in the 'Times' was better than Thucydides (of whom probably he did not know much). That was Mr Cobden, we think. Mr John Bright averred Bancroft's 'History of the United States' to be one of the highest efforts of human genius. These were, no doubt, great men both, but not presumably authorities in literature; whereas a young master at a great public school, fresh from his first-class and the University, ought to know something at least of that occult subject. It is less wonder that at another public school of much smaller pretensions, a grammar-school in one of the Midland counties, the headmaster declined a prize for literature, offered by a lady interested in the place—the subject she suggested for the first year being Addison. Addison! I hope he did not ask who was Addison—but he replied testily that his boys knew nothing, and had no time to learn anything, about such out-of-date persons. Now these are not old stockbrokers and moneyed people, to whom the fluctuations of the stock market are actually of much more importance than anything else expressed in print, but the flower of English youth, of the highest class in one case, of the middle class in the other, and it is not their own prosaic tendencies but their masters and tutors that are the cause. This the Looker-on thinks is a new thing. At Eton, we believe, every house has now a reading-room furnished with all the journals of the day. In former times provision was made of a 'Times' or 'Morning Post,' which indeed the captain of the house and his friends usually absorbed. Now the very lag of the school may secure a

glimpse every day of his favourite papers. "I have seen them all, thanks," says the hero of fourteen when he pays you a call, and waves aside your kind, but perhaps not wholly disinterested, offer of a paper. With the topics of the day thus occupying his enlightened attention, it may easily be imagined that he has little time for those worthies of a past generation who are but old fogeys to him.

Among the novelties which excite our prejudices, there came under our observation the other day a scene which we frankly confess would a few years ago have made as much as remains of our hair stand on end—being one of the latest exhibitions of emancipation in women, the new exercise which has put every other in the background for the moment. The Looker-on does not deny that he is in some respects a prejudiced person: insensibly as he takes his stand at the corner and watches the coming and going of the crowd, his opinion veers round to the paths he has pondered in the past and the things he has seen when probably he had a more active part in the spectacle than that which belongs to a Looker-on. Nevertheless, for a person born pretty early in the century, it is his *rôle* to be charitable and to respect to some extent those vagaries of fashion which are the source of so much of his tranquil amusement. The other day he found himself on that sunny bank of the Serpentine which is as much like the shore of a little lake artificialised but not artificial as it is permitted to anything of the kind to be. And it was a morning of early summer, the sun shining, the water sparkling, the foliage more than half unfolded, and that sense of holiday diffused through the air which is so pleasant-

ly characteristic of the beginning of the season, before things have become hot and dusty and hurried, which is their inevitable fate as the weeks go on. The road under these more than half-clothed branches, whose flickering leaves danced and fluttered in the pleasant air and gave the sunshine an additional glow by means of their tender shade, was full of glancing skimming figures, flying along on noiseless wheels, sometimes in groups of three or four—soft swallow flights, like birds that sweep on the breeze without motion or whirr of the extended wings. Well, yes: I allow they were only the young women on their bicycles, and that bicycles are not pretty things,—and when you see the riders flushed and anxious, with wild locks flying loose and a weather-beaten air, nothing can be less poetical. But on this delightful bit of road given up to them, between the water and the park, all fresh as the morning, looking somehow in their multitude as if they were all dainty, gentle, more or less sensible, trim of waist and neat of foot, the spectacle was charming. Perhaps if we had not seen the women in Paris, in their trousers, with little spindle-shanks coming out of the wide bags on the legs, we should not have been so much charmed by these gliding coveys, swans or pigeons or swallows, making sweeps and wide circles up and down as their prototypes do. It is impossible that they can all be pretty; it is impossible even, in this day of big women, that they can all be so dainty, spotless, and femininely small. But flying along together, with their soft movement and noiseless sweep, the elderly Looker-on could but put his hand on his heart and salute the graceful riders one and all. Some of the papers,

I perceive, comment indignantly on the presumption of the suggestion that carriages should be debarred this promenade while the cyclists occupy it, which, after all, is only in the morning hours. I, for my part, would shut them off as arbitrarily as they are shut off from the track of the horses in Rotten Row. I would let the ladies on their wheels have it all to themselves, and call it one of the prettiest sights in town. Men? Oh, yes; to be sure there were men—very few smart ones: gawky youths, or honest middle-aged good fellows out with their daughters: I do not make much account of the men. But the girls, standing in little groups of two and three against the rail, with a glimmer about them from the polished handles, or with an occasional tinkle from a bell, going off in a sudden flight like the swallows, sweeping round, half-a-dozen together, white and blue and pink, and smart, nothing of the æsthetic trollop about them, with which we have been of late years so familiar. I allow myself vanquished. I do not think there is any prettier sight to be seen.

At the same time, it must be allowed that the bicyclist in ordinary circumstances is not pretty. When one sees her in the street among the legs of the horses, threatened by mountainous big vans, spattered by carriage-wheels, there is no admiration in the soul of the Looker-on. She is perfectly self-possessed, it is true, and mistress of herself and her implement, with that curious daring which is characteristic of the young female creature in circumstances of danger, originated by herself—a daring half made up of the traditional confidence that nobody dare harm her, and half of admiration of her own clever-

ness in having managed to place herself in these dangerous circumstances. The sentiment is quite different from that pretty terror and helplessness which once was supposed to be characteristic of her kind, and which was so much admired by our fathers. Yet there is something in it of the temerity which is the other side of alarm. She rather likes the keen sensation of having put herself in danger, accepting no responsibility, but considering the whole world bound to see her safely out of it, and, strong in these safeguards, keeping her head and her courage almost to the point of insensibility, with a coolness which is exasperating to a spectator who sees what these risks are, and how wholly uncalled for is her self-exposure. Neither do we like to see this lady when she is struggling uphill or riding for her life as fast as she can go along a country road, bent over her wheel, her skirt inflated, a lock of hair straggling, flushed, anxious, breathless, reddened and roughened by the wind. But the Looker-on is rather pleased with himself to find how candid his mind is, and how superior to natural prejudice, when he makes the avowal that he finds the scene very pretty in Hyde Park.

We do not pretend to tender any advice on politics or even political economy; but if there ever was anything more absurd than the timidity of the Government and all Governments in respect to the bicycle, we have yet to learn it. Our little dogs are taxed, the poor man's as well as the rich man's; the humblest pony has to pay for permission to draw its family to kirk and market, while these dainty polished ornamental little machines



go free. It used to be said it was because they were the luxury of the poor, and a false philanthropy would not tax the humble wheel which carried the shopboy out to the country on Sunday and made the poor clerk as well off as him who rides in the park. The plea was absurd at any time, seeing that clerk and shopboy have as good a right to pay their share of the taxes as any other subjects of her Majesty, but it is entirely ridiculous now, when the roads are crowded with dainty vehicles which cost almost as much as a pony, and are as completely luxuries as the most expensive carriages. The money freely and instantaneously spent upon these articles without a murmur is extraordinary. It has never occurred to every girl and boy in a moderate household to demand a pony: but even in the poorer families every one must have a bicycle. Has not a new millionaire family been made, and a colossal fortune accumulated, by the mere rag of india-rubber which encases the wheels? And yet we pay toll upon all our humble necessities, while not a farthing do these expensive and unnecessary little articles produce for the State. They do not harm the road, we are told. Neither does my little terrier injure the road; but the Chancellor of the Exchequer pounces upon him.

Probably that great man himself rides a bicycle, and his wife and his daughters, and everybody belonging to him. Quite a little fortune, probably, is invested in the wheels of the family—six times as much as was the cost of the vicar's humble pony-cart and the respectable animal that draws it. I would strike and spare not were I in Sir Michael Hicks-Beach's shoes. It is true he has a surplus, and is in a

merciful mood. But when one thinks of the ships that we have got to build! A gunboat, at least a torpedo-boat,—those little assassins of the deep,—might come out of the new luxury of the road, and justice be done to the humble ponies and chaises. We are all rather cowardly nowadays in respect to anything that may be supposed to touch the poor man, officially so called, or diminish his enjoyment, but that sentiment may surely be subdued now when the bicycle has become so universally the fashion. The Looker-on, on his own account, were he in authority, would impose, say, a sliding-scale of taxation for bicycles and perambulators, those two nuisances of the streets. There might be exemptions. The grimy vehicles which carry the babies of the slums, and those which the washerwoman uses to convey her clothes, might go free. But what of the dainty little carriages, miniature barouches on C springs, mail-carts of the finest description, which trip us up at every corner? I would put a modest toll, say of five shillings, on every one of them, so that the British baby might enter life, even before it could walk, with the proud satisfaction of paying its way. The bicycles might have their sliding-scale also—ten shillings a-head, at least, upon my pretty friends by the Serpentine—one, perhaps, for the shopboy. This, however, by the way, is a bold dash into the difficulties of graduated taxation, a subject upon which the observant fool may rush in where Cabinet Ministers fear to tread. Spectators are irresponsible persons: it is not for them to do it or to say how it is to be done; but if it is not done, we cannot help thinking that it will be because the authorities are afraid.

The expenditure of all that

money, however, so freely and so easily, is a wonderful thing in itself: as it is also a wonderful thing, going in and out of London, or, indeed, of any great town, to pass through one comfortable suburb after another and speculate for a moment upon the extraordinary diffusion of money which is evident there. These pretty pleasant houses, miles of them, reposing among their gardens, seated on trim lawns, half buried at this genial season in thickets of flowering lilac, hawthorn, and every sweet smelling thing, milky towers of chestnut bloom penetrating the greenery, "dropping wells" of gold rather than of fire streaming down from the laburnums—are an amazing sight. These are not the dwellings of rich people; they represent and house families which spend easily and comfortably, without pretension and without show, a few thousand pounds a-year; families which crowd all the picture-galleries, subscribe to all the libraries, go to the theatres, in short have no need to deny themselves any pleasant thing, or sight, or modest indulgence. A great country-house here and there is a fine sight, and impresses everybody. You can count the examples of it in a county, in a district, and venerate if you will that centre of wealth—very likely of splendour, of hospitality on a great scale, of public importance and magnificence. But take a mile of suburban road lined with modest mansions such as above described, and you will soon out-balance the nobleman's rental, and make the new millionaire's millions pale. Give me neither poverty nor riches, says the Sage of the Proverbs. It is startling to realise how many people enjoy this ideal state: for these miles of roads stretch out like rays on

every side not only of London but of every important town in the kingdom. They go on from year to year in calm abundance, giving their children what is considered the best education, the best of everything. The income of a suburb of this kind, added together, would make up a prince's civil list. And yet nobody is rich. The bicycles are one evidence of this unpretending opulence. Nobody thinks twice of forty or fifty pounds if fashion demands it. It is one of the most amazing characteristics of modern life. I do not suppose that one in a hundred of these good people thinks of going to Court, of pressing into Society (with a big S), or in short of doing anything that does not suit a composed way of living; but how comfortable, how ample, how refined in all essentials that way of living is!

The pictures are one of the first features of London in May to which everybody turns. It is a little difficult to tell why, since all our critics assure us that Art is in the very worst of ways, and a great many people shrug their shoulders as they come down the Academy stairs. Notwithstanding, the crowd is as great as ever, and it is often painfully difficult to see the pictures at all over or between the shoulders which shut them out from the view—and which are not, as sometimes on a Private View, interesting shoulders in themselves, and worth seeing. A Private View, with its frank indifference to the object for which all these smart persons have assembled, is a fine function. It is so amusing in its self-absorption, and the profound conviction it has that its own small talk, and welcome of its friends whom it has parted with so long ago as last

night, and the jargon of its special set, is much more interesting than Art, though adorned by the biggest of capital letters. It is indeed the most honest function in Society, being truly and candidly uninfluenced by any surroundings except those of its own individuality—save indeed for the few unfortunate people to be found everywhere, who are of those who know nobody, and who have a forlorn air of being entirely out as they stroll melancholic round the walls and actually look at the pictures, having nothing more important to occupy their attention. The exhibition of the Royal Academy ushered in by this cynical preparatory assembly, and expecting the assault of all the newspapers, is to the calm eyes of the Looker-on—not learned, nor pretending to more insight than is involved in his name—very much like most of the exhibitions, and they have been many, which these eyes have seen. The great thing it wants, in his opinion—also in common with most other exhibitions—is interest, that salt of the earth. There is, no doubt, a great deal of good work. There is some fine intention, ambition not much but sincere enough in its way—ambition to get a good place, perhaps to outdo a rival, certainly to be admired and to sell its picture, all perfectly legitimate objects of desire. But there does not seem to be much ambition higher than this; and except to professional critics and those who are sufficiently educated to be entranced by the qualities of the brushwork and the technique of the composition (or the absence of these qualities), interest is deplorably wanting. Painter and Critic will reply, we know, with immense splendour of superiority, “Ah, you miss the anecdotal!” which is a

fine way of expressing their belief that you are of a very mean order of intellect and know nothing about Art. Yes, we miss the anecdotal. We should prefer that to nothing. A spark of human meaning is always better than pure nothingness, even if it is of the veriest vulgarity or the most commonplace sentiment. We should prefer even a sick child, such as makes the unsophisticated female spectator put a finger to her eye, to an Academy model with (or without) a fancy costume. Academy models are no doubt necessary, but it is unfortunate that they all bear the marks of their profession, whether they masquerade as Venus in nothing at all, or as cavaliers in the heaviest armour. They force themselves upon our recognition when we are most anxious to forget them. We allow it is a hard case, for without these persons it is to be presumed Art could not be. Still they are a grievous drawback to Art.

It is curious, and we do not doubt it is in accordance with our special necessities and developments, to speak the language of to-day—that English and Scotch art should concentrate itself so much on the landscape and the portrait. There is, for instance, an almost innumerable collection of pictures on those walls representing the fulness of a summer day in some calm and pleasant landscape, sometimes with a mere prospect of green fields, sometimes by a river's side, sometimes among the corn, sometimes on the edge of a path. None of them perhaps are great, but almost all of them are pleasing. They are not above the necessities of the parlour, though none of them probably will ever find a place there. One can imagine that to have one upon

our wall in the grey days which so often prevail would be a great enlivenment, and bring sunshine or a reflection of it into life which has too little sun. Almost all have something of that sentiment of warmth and light which is so good for us, and which for occasional long periods is so wanting in these islands. Nothing is more bright—no, not the most brilliant skies of the South—than English or Scotch sunshine when we have it; and we have a great deal more of it than even we ourselves allow. This May, for instance, has been a perfect poet's May. The delightful bushes which bear its name have been white and fragrant, almost all the month, standing dotted like great nosegays over the green country; but at least five out of ten of us will remember the cold wind, and will not remember the sunshine, with that delight in putting our worst foot foremost which is the instinct of the race.

But it is undeniably the fact that we have a great many dull and grey days. Corot, with the deepest respect be it spoken, is not for us. With all his delicate gradations of shade, which, like a microscope of colour and light, reveal to us a myriad mysteries which we had never suspected, lines and *nuances* too delicate to be discovered by the (our) naked eye, it requires the glare of the sunshine of the South to make him the full healer and consoler which he was born to be. The ethereal coolness, the translucent dusk of his pictures, are precious in his own country; but for us the blaze of the sunshine, the sparkle of the water, are more needful. In all the consolations of art we want the thing we have not, a reminiscence and a revelation of something rare to our experience,

not to be secured by the ordinary methods. This is, I think, one of the reasons why our landscape-painters prefer the blazing noon to the poetic twilight. We require it more; we need warmth, not coolness,—the sensation of fields basking in the sunshine, rather than of the delicate glades under the half-light. In November a sunny landscape is a kind of salvation.

There are many very pleasant, indeed admirable, pieces of work in the Academy, of this class, but not one, we fear, by which 1896 will be remembered among the years. Of those which thrust themselves upon the eye, M. Le Thanque's bits of sunshine are among the pleasantest. The geese cackling, crowding to the pond down the slope, which is flecked through the leaves with sunshine that is almost pure flame, bursting into every crevice of the shade, trembling and quivering upon the mossy underground, is enough to make a child laugh with pleasure. The Looker-on even feels inclined that way, in much the same spirit as the child. This little picture is probably tricky, a *tour de force*; but the surprise of its brightness is one of the few points of interest and feeling upon these walls. Mr Clausen's Scarecrow—Bird-scaring he calls it—is very different, and it is, we believe, much better art. It makes us not warm but cold, which is what we have just said we did not want: but we are not called upon to be consistent. The grotesque urchin, with a sack caught across his shoulders for warmth, and his ragged legs stuck in the ground like the artificial thing that usually simulates him, has made a smoky fire of thorns on the edge of the field. It is the coldest of early spring mornings—cold as winter, but

ruddy and hopeful, for it is March—and so is he, Spring in its roughest aspect, his warm breath steaming into the cold, and the birds, little thievish companions, streaming off across the sky away from the new-sown furrows,—he and his smoke too much for them. The same artist sends two studies of boys in the dark of a barn, with a gleam of morning sun glorious through the chink of a door, but with the figures too much in the shade to catch the common eye, which almost might have been from Millet's hand.

Among the portraits, of which there are many very good, there is none, we think, so good as Mr Sargent's portrait of Mr Chamberlain. It is a marvel of solid painting and reality, sound and strong, the aspect one of perfect self-command and composure, but one hand grasping his papers on the table with a grip of force which betrays something more within than that steady calm. He might be making his statement about the Transvaal, steady as the table he leans on, as becomes a British Minister, yet with a certain strong controlled excitement which shows the strain of nature. The one hand hangs quite still, the other thrills with a high agitation, though every exhibition of feeling is restrained. It is thus we like to see our men of action,—not without feeling, which is German and Bismarckian—nay, with a tingling of the nerves and strain of muscle, but absolutely within control. There are several other portraits by Mr Sargent which are greatly applauded, but they do not move us—ladies, and young ones and fair, more or less; it is curious that they should be so much less interesting than they used to be. It is not that the Looker-on is growing old, for an hour ago his heart was all aglow

for the young ladies on the bicycles. Why do they no longer make portraits to light up a gallery? Sir Joshua found the way of it, and various others after him. They are principally distinguished now for the excellence of their gowns. A white satin skirt catches one's eye: it is almost as good as Terburg. The head above it—well? Oh, it was a lady; we did not notice it much. This must be wrong somehow. Mr Sant, that old veteran, gives us a large-eyed, angelic countenance which may be Miss Dorothea Baird, but certainly is not Trilby. We remember his curled darlings since almost before the historic period. Is he emulous of Titian in point of continuance? But Titian painted old saints, not young ladies, when he reached the height of years. They don't succeed on canvas nowadays, these angelical faces. Why is it, we wonder? Have they not sufficient expression? Are they and the painter too much occupied with their clothes? We can but repeat that it seems wrong.

The picture which has, perhaps, been most discussed by the press, and which at first attracted much public attention, is that of Mr Abbey in the great room, representing the wooing of Lady Anne by "Orookback Richard." We have seen a description of this picture by a well-known critic, in which the tremendous solemnity of the royal funeral is elaborately pointed out, with many sarcastic references to the ignorance of the British public as to what it is all about. The critic, and the painter also, seem to have been of opinion that it was the funeral of a reigning king that was going on, with all the funeral paraphernalia common to such a grand ceremony. It was in fact the hurried funeral of a royal victim carried from his

prison by a group of the faithful, and followed by but one mourner, the weak and gentle Anne, who bids the gentlemen pause and set down their burden while she pours forth his elegy. In Mr Abbey's picture there is a solemn crowd, as if Henry had been in all his glory, and they march on, or appear to do so, indifferent to the pause of the mistress, who is the sole mover of the procession, and not, as appears, an insignificant appendage to it. There is something praiseworthy in the scared infantile countenance of Anne, a creature capable of having her artless mind distracted by the oily words of the tempter, but not of pouring forth all the invectives which have preceded the meeting. As for Richard, he is the crookback of a country fair rather than of the historical drama, a mean ruffian, whose body is worse than his mind, without either dignity or persuasiveness. We ask ourselves—not, Was ever woman in this fashion wooed? but—Did ever woman condescend to parley with such an evident rascal? one who has nothing in the world to recommend him, not even the air of a gentleman, much less of a prince and the strongest politician of his time. If this is the best the Academy can do in the way of interpreting Shakespeare, it is a pity. And Mr Abbey's picture is one that has the honours of the moment, an almost unique specimen of the highest *genre* in art.

It is a pity, too, that in the choice of members of the English Academy of Arts there should apparently be so many more strangers than Englishmen. Is it because of that craze for conciliating America, which has led to so many foolish proceedings, and, we must add, produced so very small a result,

that two—nay, three—Americans should have been the last elected? Mr Sargent justifies his position and his nationality need no count; but Mr Boughton, a mill manufacturer of Puritan maidenhood, what has he done of such superlative excellence as to warrant us in forgetting that he is not of the nation to which this distinction belongs? Mr Abbey, we think has been known hitherto chiefly as an illustrator of books. Three Americans, a German, and a Dutchman are a large percentage of the foreign in so exclusively national an institution. What is the meaning of it? Three of these strangers are quite in the front of our small band. Are there no Englishmen fit for the distinction, which surely ought, in the nature of things, to be preserved for them alone? If this is the case, surely it is the merest mockery to speak of the English school. Mr Whistler, too, the model and admiration of so many, is American. Should we not call the Society in Burlington House the International or the Cosmopolitan Academy instead of the Royal? It is a humiliating confession of national weakness if that is what it means.

And yet weakness is not precisely the character which we should attribute to the Newlyn school or the Glasgow school, two vigorous new shoots of the old tree. The "New Calf" of Mr Stanhope Forbes is not a romantic subject, but it is strong enough at least, and lights up its wall with that contrast of lights which is the joy of the modern school. But a subject is apparently the most difficult of all things to an English painter. He cannot help knowing that the public loves it—nay, will willingly accept inferior work for the sake of it—a universal sentiment which is not to be met by

professional scorn of the anecdotal, but by an enlightened endeavour to take advantage of that prepossession. "Ah, here is a picture I shall like," we heard a lady say with sudden interest in her tone. We turned to look, and if possible to share that interest. It was a picture of a very well-dressed gentleman sitting alone by a table, where it was easy to divine, by the traces of picturesque disorder and a few scraps of orange-blossom scattered on table and floor, that his daughter's wedding-breakfast had been spread that morning. His only daughter, no doubt, as the poor gentleman looked so woe-begone. It was equally clear that he must be a widower, that he must have devoted his life to his child, and, though a personable man and not so old, had no mind to marry again. A smile stole (of course) to the lip of the Looker-on. He, too, was superior to the easy spell. Yet still he was obliged to acknowledge that to flash through such a sequence of suggestions was perhaps in reality a better exercise for the simple soul than the glow of the lamplight in the byre, or the staggering calf at its first meal. Might not the painters think it over a little? The human emotions need not be vulgar, nor their expressions fictitious or superficial. How happy were the old painters, with their never exhausted, always interesting subject, combining all that was most simple and all that was most elevated. The divine child, the fairest spotless mother, with Fate and Sorrow brooding over the perfect bliss of motherhood and infancy! Alas! nowadays, sacred subjects fare but badly in nineteenth-century hands. It is well when they are not altogether profane.

Mr Gotch's picture of "Alleluia"

is one that probably will be popular: there used to be a series, we think, of prim and pretty choir-boys, in their little white surplices and with the cleanest faces, which was engraved and shone in all the print-shop windows, and which it will probably wound this young artist much to have his work compared to. The smooth choir-boys, all brushed and trimmed for the occasion, were indeed much prettier than the bundle of open-mouthed girls, some of them little baggages, and full of scarcely repressed mischief—a trifle too natural for their gold background—which gives the wandering and tired eye a gleam of pleasure among so many vague canvasses meaning nothing in particular. We can imagine that it would be pleasant to have that song going on in a corner of a big house to which we could resort occasionally, always with a fresh pleasure. But it is a pity to spoil the beauty of the little things by opening their mouths so wide. We feel that they have been painfully well trained, much better than the majority of choristers, and that an idle one here and there who would have let her part slide through lips all but closed—which in strictest adherence to nature there certainly would have been—would have added to the charm of the picture.

It is curious to record, amidst the rarity of pictures on sacred subjects which we have remarked, and their still rarer success, the arrival among us of M. Tissot's show, which has in our own mind run a course of altered and changing interest, which, did we plume ourselves on consistency, we should now feel somewhat ashamed of; but a Looker-on is essentially a man of changing

and thrown so wonderful a gleam of light upon that most curious of all Courts, the Court of the Vatican, should look at with much interest. We remember the outcry of a youthful and ingenuous observer suddenly brought before the portrait of an English divine who was generally considered as the suavest and most amiable of men: "Oh, what a cruel face!" the young critic cried, to the amazement of the standers-by. This Manning might be the head of the Inquisition. He sits and ponders in the grey of his old age, with no anger or disturbance in his face, but a bloodless, steady passion of resolve and certainty. No doubt or tremor there, no human yearning. The face was always remarkable. It was, as we remember it in former years, a fine type of the Churchman, gracious, bland, inscrutable. This is the old man who has outgrown humanity, the intellectual schemer who has come to know nothing in heaven or earth but his one unflinching and unmitigated aim.

The Looker-on, standing apart from all technical questions and prejudices of the schools, wishes much he could adore Mr Watts, as most people whose opinions are to be respected do. The mellow glow of the colour, Venetian in its warmth, moves us with admiration only, not interest. And he wishes also that he could admire the works of Sir E. Burne Jones, as he is aware these performances deserve. He would prefer not to ask himself, with indignation, whether anybody supposes that cadaverous boy without any body, or at least with the unhealthiest thinness of sixteen, could be the great Sir Lancelot. "More hard than is the stone!" the poetical painter quotes, and flings you a tender youth, no more solid than

the slimmest maiden, upon the chapel stones, where you would suppose he had been put for punishment after some naughtiness. "I am always forgetting that Burne Jones is purely decorative," says a vexed young voice at our side, eager to worship yet moved by a touch of common-sense. Is that decorative? we ask ourselves. But happily Aurora, as she trips out of a blue dawn with the reflection through her draperies of a robust and rosy life, certainly is. She does not look as if she had any intention of striking the cymbals which she holds in her extended hands, but yet there is dawn in her and the coming of day; and that hushed magical air in which nothing wakes but herself, is true and sweet. There is another realisation of that magical air, like a Scotch midnight, clear, still, unearthly, in a little picture by Mr Stott, which he calls "The Golden Moon"—because, we suppose, that luminary has begun to appear over the hill—but which is much more the shadowless hour in which dark is not dark nor light light, and which it appears to us is of all atmospheric effects the one most mystic and most wonderful.

Mr Alma Tadema has sent hither, as to a favourite place where he chooses to be seen in his wilful moods, a group of heads, which, without being "heads in a charger," served up on a tray, like those of last year, are extremely quaint in their pose close together, gazing apparently at a picture, the back of which is turned to the spectator, several wonderful pairs of hands clustering together beneath in the huddled mass of the little crowd. This is not an Alma Tadema, a production of which the reader will see some fine specimens at the Royal Aca-

demy, but a picture painted by Mr Alma Tadema; and the Looker-on points it out as a proof of what he ventured to say before, that there is more interest in this exhibition than in the larger one. After all, the interesting is dearer to feeble mortal intelligence even than the beautiful.

There is a curious incident connected with Art and its Exhibitions which a critic or two has mentioned, dismally refraining from comment: but the Looker-on is no critic, only a looker-on. Two names of well-known artists have disappeared this year from the lists. They are both young men of growing reputation, and both have sent pictures to the Academy, to the exhibition of which they have sent contributions for years. They have been apparently rejected like the merest tyros. What, we cannot but wonder, does this mean? Is it a permissible exercise of caprice on the part of a national corporation to which the country looks for guidance, and against which there is no appeal? Can we suppose that Mr Tuke and Mr Furze have done so badly this year as to send work unworthy of themselves and the Academy? or if not—and it is scarcely a feasible conjecture—what then is the reason? The public might have been permitted to judge whether or not there was so great a falling off. There are and must be no doubt many misadventures in respect to the contributions of the unknown. We have heard of a picture which was rejected one year, and, untouched and unchanged, received the next, along with a hundred other evidences of caprice or accident. But if there is any security at all in a career which must always be more or less precarious and dependent upon varying taste and fashion, and the less or greater artistic

insight of the public—not a sure card in any case—it should certainly be, that a man already favourably known should be safe in his possession of the means of showing his work. As a matter of fact, we believe it usually is so. Why then this extraordinary breach of a tacit understanding? One of these gentlemen at least, so far as we know, was quite as eligible for promotion as some of those who have received the honours of an Associate. They have of course no appeal against such a decision. It is wise on their part to say nothing about it, but take the rebuff as it is the tradition of English gentlemen to do. The Looker-on is not acquainted with either, and so is free to ask a question which must have been on the lips of many.

Of the theatre there is not very much to say: so little indeed that some of those critics in the weekly papers who supply us with so many details about their private habits, and now and then with delightfully original views as to art and letters *apropos* of the theatres, have fallen a little flat for want of a thread to hang their pleasant self-disclosures upon, though that is rather because of the absence of life in the dramas of the moment than from any slackness of production or failure in the number of novelties presented to the playgoer. The curious outbreak of Piety, or attempt of the theatre to turn itself into a sort of auxiliary and sentimental chapel or annexe to the Church, is about as odd as anything can well be. The walls even now are still placarded with a cross, sometimes encircled with large rays as in a Sunday-school transparency, and very strangely mingled with the new posters by which our walls and hoardings are supposed to be so

much beautified. As these posters generally consist of representations of apparently disreputable women, the cross, like a tombstone, is especially out of place among them. We are afraid that we have forgotten what is the story introduced under this extraordinarily inappropriate title; but there have been several of a similar spirit, and it is wonderful to imagine how the popular dramatist should have taken up this ambition. To make religion a sort of go-between, by whose means the transactions between those purest of pure women who inevitably go wrong, and those men who find in their holiness the most piquant addition, and, as it were, sauce, to vice, are managed with many ineffable emotions—is not perhaps altogether new. But we doubt if it was ever practically attempted as a stage method before. The Bible which one notorious lady snatches from the fire, the tryst which another makes with her palpitating lover in heaven—that likely ground for the renewal of illicit connections—the close relation which it is hoped to show between the highest possible development of feminine perfection and the preliminary breach of all its laws—the one leading to the other in certain favoured natures with almost mathematical certainty—have all been heard of in literature before now. But the active patronage of Faith which our playwrights have taken up, or rather did take up for an enthusiastic moment, is more or less novel, and has resulted, we hear, in various semi-comic alterations in the audience to suit that exemplary tone. We heard not long ago of a devout family, seated in the unaccustomed stalls, headed by the father and mother, eager to patronise the good intention—that seizure of the arms of

the enemy to serve the best of causes which has always fascinated a certain class of good people—and anxious that their children should be re-impressed by the dictates of religion so often taught to them under different forms, and now attended by every charm of Sin translated to the uses of virtue. The good people looked at each other and murmured, How true! how beautiful! when Mrs Ebbsmith adored her Testament, or Michael stretched his arms towards his lost angel. To meet in heaven! What a celestial aspiration,—a thought elevated above the world!

These simple saints forgot that it was to carry on previous relations there that the lover longed, and that the paradise desired was rather Mahometan than Christian. But the impulse that led to this wave of drama is more interesting to the spectator than the thing itself, which was naturally clumsy. From whence did it come? From a real fashionable *revirement* towards Piety as an amazingly becoming thing, or from a sense of their own power to make a revolution in favour of that Christianity which a novel the other day was supposed to have at last demolished for good and all? When Dagon falls, as he does from time to time, it is the finest, profitabest, most successful thing to put him up again. Was that the object of the gentlemen, or their hope? Anyhow, it seems to have failed; and a relapse of riotous comedy, which we may hope is on the whole more wholesome, has taken its place. But it is curious to find a trio at least of English play-writers giving a conscientious hand to Christianity—nobly helping it up again by popular methods and the never-failing charms of the improper woman, and a little surprised, wounded,

which is a thing quite within your own power to restrain if you so please. I don't like the practising of the young ladies next door, but I put up with it because I cannot help it, and have no right to interfere with the liberty of the subject in their case, even when they scorch (I mean *écorcher*, which is a different thing: but there is no handy word for it) my ears, with a horrible rendering of my favourite airs, which is worse, much worse, than the organ in the street. Putting up with things is famous practice: it will stand you, oh most sensitive of literary men, in better stead, I assure you earnestly, than making the most furious row about it, and sending off the poor performer—where? to the house two doors off where the baby is beckoning to him. The baby, too, is a British subject born to freedom. As for the street cries, how poor a creature must he be who protests against that primitive, ancient, and sometimes even nicely modulated voice of the seller. It is a charm to hear how the summer air modifies and softens it, and to think that through hundreds of lively years it has sounded unbroken. The street cries are one of the natural ties between the nations. I don't know if they have street cries in New York; it would be like the imperious, thin-skinned, high-strung Republican, disrespectful of everybody's likings but his own, to banish that primitive voice; but it exists everywhere else, and will no doubt exist as long as the world does. And if our own imperious, high-strung, thin-skinned classes, who would exercise a tyrannical sway over everything that annoys them and suppress every sound that distracts their sublime minds, were to bend their lofty spirits to the admirable practice of putting up

with it, what excellent results would ensue. You would write better, I believe, my fine instructors of the world: your spirits would soften and mellow with the permission graciously accorded by you to others—which is a concession you are forced to make in many cases—to exercise their freedom. What good does it do you to stop the organ outside when you can't stop the violoncello next door. Put up with it, put up with it!—

Heavens, my neighbour is tuning up! There is to be a rehearsal with four fiddles. I know it: it is a long sonata, and will last, with the necessary repetitions and goings-back, "We'll take that passage over again," for at least an hour. What shall I do? Take my hat and rush out to the noisy street or anywhere. How savagely do I send the organ man flying! but that does me no good. Alas! I have to put up with my musicians next door. Sometimes, indeed, I am congratulated upon my vicinity. "These delightful musical people: and such good music! it must be a constant entertainment for you." But I have to put up with them. Therefore it is plain that the abolition of the organ could be only the most feeble of alleviations: and that to put up all round is really the only way.

That Burns' Centenary should produce an admirable edition of Burns, a standard of accuracy and good editing beyond the reach of cavil, is a better thing than many dinners, or even those spare banquets which have been fashionable in late days upon such anniversaries, in which cakes and claret and a pale toast-and-water brew of speeches are the chief features. Mr Henley, who is a poet himself

of much power and fervour, and no taste at all for toast and water, guarantees the work as worthy of the poet, and there has been the greatest and most scrupulous care in its preparation, and much research into manuscript variations, and such fragments as are left to show the methods of the primitive workshop in which Burns cut and polished his jewels with as much delicacy as his homely tools permitted, and often with that discrimination of genius which, if Mr Henley will permit us, we will still venture to consider superior to all the tools in the world. Yet, though we love him, we have a crow to pluck with Mr Henley. He says some fine things of Burns, but he also says some in which we imagine he thought more of the theories of the age and the dogmas of development than of either fact or poetry. If ever a man in a world, bound hand and foot to the chariot-wheels of Darwin, ought to preserve an instinct of freedom, surely it should be a poet: and among existing poets we should have imagined Mr Henley to be one of the most individual, and therefore the least docile to that teaching. But no—his age, his environment, heaven bless it! his associates perhaps, have been too much even for the poet, and to the applause of all his peers, he has now discovered how completely Burns, like the iron-works on the Clyde, or the nightcaps of Kilmar-nock, was a product, the outcome of remote predecessors, fetching his very rhymes through heaven knows how many channels from the *rime corée* of France, and many more fine sources, so that neither the rhymes nor the man were original at all. Mr Henley explains:—

“For the annotations on certain

staves and sources of inspiration their [i.e., the editors'] purpose is to emphasise the theory that Burns, for all his demonstration of some modern tendencies, was not the founder of a dynasty, but the heir to a flourishing tradition, and the last of an ancient line: that he is demonstrably the outcome of an environment, and not in any but the narrowest sense the unnatural birth of Poesy and Time, which he is sometimes held to be. Being a great artist he derives from a numerous ancestry; and like all great artists he is partly an effect of local and peculiar conditions, and partly the product of immediate and remote forbears. Genius apart, in fact he is *ultimus Scotorum*, the last expression of the old Scots world, and therewith the culmination of a school deep rooted in the past, which, by producing such men as Dunbar and Scott and Alexander Montgomerie, as Ramsay and Ferguson and the nameless lyrists of the song-books, made it possible for him to be.”

Thus does even a poet find in the jargon of the age something superior — a supposed explanation of how the greatest marvel of existence came to be, so as to show that there is nothing miraculous anywhere, but only a cut-and-dry process, “demonstrably the outcome of an environment”! We should like to see Mr Henley demonstrate how one bright-eyed farmer’s son among a multitude should alone stand out from that environment and excel all the forbears who made him, though probably the most of them were quite unknown to him: or in what way it was that the incidents of the ploughed fields should be common work to all the rest and to him suggest the tender compassion, the profound reflections, the exquisite musing of poetry. And why, with the same environment, and so much more illustrious an ancestor added on to the distant forefathers, why do we not

have another Burns, if not every year, at least every half-century? What is there to account for these extraordinary breaks in the succession? Why should any man be *ultimus Scotorum*? There must, we presume, have been a first, who arose without any environment to account for him. Somebody even must first have invented the *rime corée*: so that even in this point of view the difficulty is but pushed back, and not in the least accounted for. But why should there ever be a last? The environment has not been broken up. The numerous ancestry are more numerous than ever: even—which carries the question down from the realms of the sublime to those of the ridiculous—the same tongue remains, and is made abundant, though not divine use of. Why these long breaches in the descent? A thing that is demonstrable in its existence must also have evident reasons, when it breaks down, for its non-existence. Why has it stopped, if it is so easy as all that? and how in the ancient ages did it begin?

"Genius apart," however, Mr Henley says, though he does not evidently intend to suggest that genius had anything to do with it. Genius, however, is a very great exception to make; and if his modified meaning was that certain rhymes and other paraphernalia of Poetry were lying about the fields and floating in the morning mists when that strangest of inexplicable things suddenly, nobody knowing, not even itself, arose among the pastoral braes of Ayr, we have nothing to say against it. *Va pour la rime corée!* Burns knew nothing about it, nor do most people. Its probable transmission from France to Scotland is a pretty fantasy enough to make glad the

heart of Professor Patrick Geddes, and merit a toast at the next banquet of the Franco-Ecossaise Society. But that it should be thrust into our face as accounting for Burns! Let Mr Henley tell us what kind of environment will account for Genius, and he shall father his rhymes where he will. What made thee different, oh man? on what ground do we know the name of Mr Henley? Genius apart, where would our poet be?—doubtless where Burns would be but for that strange thing which no man can explain, "the unnatural birth of Poesy and Time"—the most wonderful as we think of all the creations of God. And we confess that we think the theory of the God-created is not only much more beautiful but much more reasonable than the scientific cant about environment,—which ought at the very least to make poets come by dozens, by myriads like the tadpoles, but does not—to our great good fortune, we must believe.

The Looker-on has no right, perhaps, to speak so hotly, but the hatred of cant is strong in his soul. Nobody will be any the wiser as to what made Burns, from Mr Henley's elaborate notes; for though he says it is demonstrable, he does not attempt to demonstrate it; but the reader will find, which is all he will probably desire to find, many interesting glimpses of the manner in which he "who walked in glory and in joy, following his plough, along the mountain-side," smoothed and polished the verses which came to him upon those banks and braes. Our Burns, our mountain Bard, our inspired ploughman! What floods of nonsense have been spoken in his name, what foolish celebrations held! His warmest lovers have held him up to re-

that art—are perhaps too much for the public. Christina has suffered from her consanguinity to Dante Rossetti. She has also suffered from the monotony of tone which in a large collection of short poems it is so difficult to overcome; while the longer poems, “Goblin-Market” and the “Pageant,” though very delightful in parts, are too delicate in their workmanship, and have too little hold on human life to gain an extended audience. There is, however, a group of admirable poems which she has called “Madonna Innominato,”—which may perhaps be compared to Mrs Browning’s “Sonnets from the Portuguese,” and, we think, to the disadvantage of the latter,—the supposed utterance of some unknown lady in the depths of the ages, of love which never found an earthly close, of the wistfulness and the longing of a virgin soul set apart or abandoned. The “Blessed Damozel,” which made the poetic position, so to speak, of the brother, is in our opinion inferior to this wonderful restrained and exquisite revelation, from within not without, of the heart of a woman. It has not had sufficient prominence in what we must call the waste of poesies in which it stands, like an island with misty heights half lost in the skies, and the sea of human isolation and separateness, which parts us every one from the other, lapping softly round its shores. For that audience to which Dante (not Rossetti) appealed, the “*Donne che hanno intelletto d’Amore*,” it should be one of the most cherished of poems; but we doubt much whether it is sufficiently known to make it so. If we might suggest to editor and publisher, a small volume containing this and a few kindred poems would make a more popular and, as disclosing the

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genius of the writer, a more advantageous publication than the very large new collection which has just been given to the world, and which seems better explained by an affectionate desire to keep back nothing than by a discriminating sense of what is best for the writer’s fame. That gentle fame is now assured. But Miss Rossetti’s inspiration is almost entirely of a sad kind. Her hands are always stretched out for those who are gone,—not only gone by the common gate of the grave, but gone more disastrously still into the darkness of the world, and watched and wearied for with that infinite longing, the heart that fails and the hopes that grow sick, which is of all things the most sad. Let us find her in a happier mood for once, in the delightful flash of illumination which comes upon her after musing upon the world of unprofitable beauty, the lovely scene which there is no eye to see, the flowers that expand and bloom and fall unnoticed. To what purpose is this waste? she asks herself; then adds the consoling reflection that a lily blooming unseen

“Holds honey in its silver cup
Whereon a bee may sup,”

and, taking a deeper glance below the surface, adds, with the sweetest of philosophy,—

“And other eyes than ours
Were made to look on flowers;
Eyes of small birds, and insects small,
The deep sun-blushing rose,
Round which the prickles close,
Opens her bosom to them all—

The tiniest living thing
That soars on feathered wing,
Or crawls among the long grass out of sight,
Has just as good a right
To its appointed portion of delight
As any king.”

So would have said St Francis
to his little brothers, the bee and

apart, and listen with a pleased and softened attention. Criticism has nothing to do with the matter. These poems are the expression of the noblest feeling—of that supreme faith and patience which, with certainty, if often with sadness, await the clearing up of all the mysteries of the earth, and the passing away of all its clouds. Sorrow and parting and pain have but strengthened that sublime assurance that all will be well. The "Burial of Moses" is supposed to be Mrs Alexander's masterpiece; but we think some of the less abstract subjects are more attractive. The little volume, we do not doubt, will to many readers be a consecrated thing.

It is curious to turn back from these sacred lives and utterances to the common stir and tumult of the world. Victor Hugo in the great romance of '*Les Misérables*' has given a wonderful picture of the nuns who, prostrate in the mystery of the Perpetual Adoration, pray for those who do not pray for themselves. Such women as those whose works we have named are shut up in no cloister, nor are they withdrawn from the common troubles of the world: yet they abound, if any such exquisite natures can be supposed to abound; and the fact is wonderful, seldom realised, now and then betrayed to us by a chance publication or revelation. Under the more lovely and complete singing-garment of her grade in poetry, Christina Rossetti, too, was one of the Sisters of this Perpetual Adoration, whose soft voices murmur in the great silence when other sounds are hushed and still.

Here is a little book,¹ a little impertinent book, of which, how-

ever, we cannot find it in our heart to say anything disagreeable. Nothing could be more completely uncalled for. We know all that it is expedient to know of the long-preserved secret of Sir Walter's youth. It "left a crack" in the heart, which at first it wellnigh broke, until the end of his life. Nothing can be more touching than this, or more full of interest. What more could be said? At all events, Mr Adam Scott has no more to say. Could he have thrown any light on the individuality of the woman who had the great fate to be loved by such a man, and the great misfortune not to respond, we might, yet probably would not, have thanked him for the revelation—for it is very unlikely that such a woman would open her heart to any one on such a subject. And the mere fact that she did not respond, and wounded our Immortal, would be all that could be told,—and that we know. It is difficult not to entertain a grudge against her which is quite unjust, for Love, as everybody knows, is the most capricious and unreasonable in its choice, of anything on earth, and there is no higher or lower in its selections. However, Mr Adam Scott evidently knows nothing of Lady Forbes, which we also are content to do. She married, if not Sir Walter, a good man and true friend to Sir Walter, and thus it is evident made no unworthy choice. The little book is quite unnecessary, and even, as we have said, impertinent, touching with unauthorised hand the veils put up by those who had a right to do so. But yet it is not an irreverent or an unkind or unpleasant little

¹ Sir Walter Scott's Love-Story. By Adam Scott. Edinburgh: Macniven & Wallace.

book. It brings together several beautiful things which we had half-forgotten,—Mr Ruskin's remarks upon the subject, for instance, and little bits of story, which we could easily have found elsewhere had we thought of them, but which we have no objection to have thus placed within the reach of our hand. The best thing we can say to Mr Adam Scott is, that we kindly forgive him for disturbing that veil, with the advice not to do it again. But the reader, we think, will have no unpleasant feeling towards this gentle intruder any more than has the Looker-on. It is unadvisable to tell over again a well-known story, and still more unadvisable to print a book whose only real excuse would have been that it had something new to tell.

Life and London and all the rest of the world rush on at full force while we pause and loiter. It is hard work pushing one's way through the crowded streets; it is still harder to glide and sidle sideways—not pretty modes of progression, but indispensable in the circumstances—through the picture-galleries. And the wind blows sometimes hot and sometimes cold, like the Satyr's guest in

the Dutch picture, restraining in both ways the movements of the observer, who never knows any morning whether to put on his fur coat or the lightest in his wardrobe. Wonderful inconsistent weather, which suits us somehow, nevertheless, gives an unfailing subject of conversation, and helps the strain of caprice which is native to the mind of this island both north and south. We say we do not like it, but we do, whatever we may say. A week's dry weather in Scotland, and the nation is alarmed lest there should be a drought and the water fail. A week's sunshine in England, and we tear, if not our hair, our garments, and protest against them, as if it never could be cool again. Let us thank heaven that if there should ever be monotony in the weather, there is no likelihood of monotony in the moral world for some time to come. Politics, every one will admit, would have been too peaceful, with that delightful but slumbrous murmur of a great majority, had it not been for those explosions elsewhere, which do not seem likely to calm themselves for some time to come.

THE NEW OBSTRUCTION A SERIOUS DANGER.

THE Agricultural Ratings Bill was passed through Committee on Friday, May 22, after a continuous sitting of twenty-two and a half hours, and the most unparalleled scene of obstruction that has been witnessed since the memorable occasion when Mr Parnell and many leading members of the Irish Party were suspended, and had to be removed by force. As this article is sent to press Parliament rises for the Whitsuntide vacation, to re-assemble on the 1st of June. A fortnight's holiday had at one time been hoped for, but a fortnight's holiday between February and August is rapidly becoming a thing of the past, thanks to the change which successive Reform Bills have effected in the composition of the House of Commons. The progress made with the Agricultural Bill is so far satisfactory; but considering the opposition with which the Education Bill is threatened as soon as it gets into Committee, and the spirit in which the Agricultural Ratings Bill has already been encountered, while the Irish Land Bill still has to be read a second time, it is clear that Government cannot afford to give away many hours during the next ten weeks: though with fairly judicious management they ought to be able to place their three chief measures in the statute-book by the end of the dog-days. This will be a record with which public opinion will be abundantly satisfied. It was absurd to suppose that all the matters with which the Government undertook to deal could be disposed of in six or seven months.

This was not the way in which Mr Gladstone managed public business during his first and most successful Ministry. One thing at a time, or at most two, was his maxim. The three bills we have mentioned are quite as much as any Government need wish to pass in one year. Had they been measures of equal magnitude with Mr Gladstone's Irish Church Act, three would have been too many. Being what they are, they are just adapted to the length of an ordinary session, affording plenty of time for legitimate debates, but none for intentional prolixity.

Ministers are not without some anxiety in regard to the future of the session. But it rests with themselves to show whether it shall prognosticate disaster. As we pointed out on a previous occasion, the Radical Opposition are deliberately flying in the face of the public opinion of Great Britain. In the last Parliament the Conservative Opposition represented it. In the present House of Commons the Ministry possess an absolute party majority of a hundred and fifty, which on many critical occasions has risen to nearly double. In the former House the late Government possessed only a dwindling majority of fifteen or twenty, even including the Irish vote, and were in a minority without it. In 1893 and 1894 the Government were cramming down the throats of Parliament a policy which Great Britain indignantly repudiated, and which the head of the Cabinet admitted to be impracticable until Great Britain was converted. To-day the two chief measures of

Lord Salisbury's Administration are hailed with so much satisfaction by the country at large, that on the second reading of the Education Bill—the great measure of the session—Sir W. Harcourt could only find a hundred and fifty-six supporters to follow him into the lobby. Mr Balfour, then, finds himself in a totally different position from that which was occupied two years ago by Sir William Harcourt. The leader of the House was then using force to defeat public opinion. If the leader of the House has resort to force now, it is to prevent public opinion from being defeated,—another situation altogether, affording a justification for the employment of the closure such as Lord Rosebery could never plead.

Mr Balfour may possibly have thought, though it is not very likely that he did—he knows his man too well—that a majority of two hundred and sixty-seven in favour of the Government on the leading measure of the session would have exercised a sobering effect on the Opposition, and have caused them to reconsider the propriety of persevering in the tactics which they adopted early in the session. But if he did he was very promptly undeceived. Speaking at Tredegar on the 13th of May, the day after the division on the Education Bill, Sir William calmly announced that this decisive expression of opinion by the House of Commons went for nothing in his eyes. He should fight the bill tooth and nail, just as if the House had never spoken. It is easy to understand, of course, that Sir William Harcourt, with little prospect of ever returning to power, should think it useless to look forward to the effect of his conduct on the public, and consider

it the wiser plan to enjoy the present moment, and devote himself exclusively to the gratification to be derived from the unrestrained indulgence of party spirit. A man who has made up his mind to commit suicide, said Johnson, has nothing further to fear—"he may go and take the King of Prussia by the nose at the head of his army"; and so the statesman who is conscious that his policy while in office has virtually condemned him to Opposition for the remainder of his career may feel relieved from all responsibilities, and at liberty to please only himself, in the comfortable assurance that nothing now can do him any harm.

A political opponent, however, in this frame of mind is doubly dangerous. He may carry faction to its very worst extremities without any fear of consequences to check him. He may misrepresent, distort, and calumniate, may call black white and white black, without endangering his position in the slightest degree. And this happy truth is what Sir William Harcourt seems fully to appreciate. He talked about the closure and double-barrelled divisions on the last night but one of the debate, as if he had never heard of such things in his life before. Like the Heathen Chinee, "'twas a game he did not understand." His assumption of innocence was exquisite. There is only one way of dealing with such an adversary, and that Mr Balfour will soon find out if he has not found it out already.

Those who are callous to the moral power of a decisive parliamentary majority must be made to feel its penal power. Those who refuse to respect the House of Commons, the House of Commons is not bound to respect. If Sir William Harcourt and the rest of the Radi-

cals are as good as their word, Mr Balfour must have no hesitation whatever in using all the powers with which Parliament has invested him. A few pedantic Radicals and disappointed politicians, numbering altogether considerably less than a third of the House, can never be permitted to bar the way against a truly national Administration, strong in everything which constitutes political strength, and enjoying the full confidence and esteem of what is practically a united people.

There is too much reason to believe that the Opposition are prepared to face every extremity in the pursuit of their darling object. No falsehood is too gross for them to circulate, no arts too mean for them to practise. The latest examples of the one propensity have been supplied by Sir William Harcourt's speeches at Tredegar, and Mr Barlow's late speech at Tiverton. Sir William Harcourt boldly declares that the Education Bill is the offspring of a plot for the abolition of board schools, and for a complete reversal of the measure of 1870, which has worked with such excellent effects for the last five-and-twenty years. He further charges the authors of the bill with having "created" a religious difficulty which but for them would never have existed. The alleged unfairness in the distribution of the grant is a separate question, and the repetition of it by the Radicals may possibly indicate rather confusion of thought than wilful dishonesty. But as to the plot, what does Sir William Harcourt mean by *that*? He says that before the general election Conservatives went about telling people that they meant to do something for the voluntary schools, but care-

fully concealing from them what it was that they intended. But the people who suffered the most from this awful fraud were the denominationalists, not the secularists. The former had no reason to believe up to the last that as a condition of receiving additional assistance from the State they would be obliged to accept some form of popular control over their own schools. Against this they had always protested. But the board school party knew perfectly well all along that the injustice of which the voluntary schools complained could only be remedied by their being placed on an equality with their rivals; and that if, while the voluntaries which had no rates to fall back upon received an additional grant, the board schools which had the rates at their command received one too, the inequality would only be perpetuated. There was no deception here.

But Sir William says that the bill will create a religious difficulty hitherto unknown in our educational system. Then at that rate we are to suppose that the people of England are not only totally indifferent to the religious education of their children, but equally unmoved by the religious sham which the board school system has "created." What it is the custom to call Bible Christianity, though it may fall far short of that complete religious system which denominationalists prefer, still embraces many great dogmas and mysteries without which it is not Christianity at all. Now when it has come to this, that these doctrines are either taught in board schools by teachers who do not believe in them, or omitted from the Bible lesson altogether, who shall we say has created the religious difficulty?

All persons conversant with the subject know perfectly well what Mr Forster meant by religious teaching, and also that board schools were to supplement and not supplant voluntary schools. We turn over a page or two in the history of education, and we find voluntary schools driven to the wall, and the doctrine of the Trinity taught by Unitarians! Yet we are told that this is no interference with the compromise of 1870, and that those only are upsetting it who wish to restore the foundation on which it originally rested! Sir William and his friends have described the bill as reactionary, bigoted, and calculated to destroy or greatly to diminish the influence of the existing system. Well; if an enemy invades our country and seizes a portion of our territory, no doubt when we drive him out again we "diminish his influence." But such are not the terms by which the process is usually described.

Mr Asquith, equally determined to represent the bill as a piece of class legislation, whether facts are on his side or not, describes the 27th clause as the result of "a clerical agitation." As this is the clause allowing children to be taught the religion of their parents in all schools alike, and, where there is only the Church school, authorising Dissenters to teach in it, one would scarcely suppose that any agitation in its favour is likely to have come from the clergy. But Mr Asquith is a "top-to-bottom" man. The system of misrepresentation once begun, there is to be no sticking at trifles. There was once upon a time a well-known London *littérateur* who had a short way with his enemies. If any one offended him, he immediately gave out that

the culprit's father was a returned convict who had narrowly escaped hanging. That is the principle on which the Opposition now proceed. There is no more truth in the assertion that the 27th clause is due to the clergy than there would be in the assertion, which nobody has ever made, that Mr Asquith himself was *un jeune homme ingénu*.

With one more reference to the Education Bill we must drop the subject. Perhaps the worst and most malicious untruth which has been told on this subject was uttered by Sir William Harcourt in the speech we have so often referred to.

"It is a remarkable fact," said he, "that Sir John Gorst said that the rural voluntary schools were bad, that the small school boards in the country were bad, and they say that is because they have not got money. No; there is one thing which is more important than money. Some things cannot be got for love or money; but in many of these rural districts they had neither money nor love for education. These schools in many parts of the rural districts of England had only been kept up to the mark by the constant pressure of the Department in London, and they had resented that pressure. And this is one of the great causes of the present movement. Will that pressure be kept up by these local authorities? I fear not."

We think, however, that we know a still more remarkable fact. Will it be believed that what Sir John Gorst really did say was this, that the only really good schools in the rural districts were the village voluntary schools, and that they had been "kept up to the mark" by the clergy, and the clergy only. The parson's village school had been "the sal-

vation of rural education." "If you were to replace voluntary schools in the rural districts by board schools you would degrade national education." It is to prevent this result that the present measure is brought forward—to save from destruction the schools which have saved rural education. And yet Sir William Harcourt, in referring to this very passage in Sir John Gorst's speech, could garble it as we have seen, and wholly omit all reference to the important reservation with which it was accompanied. This is truly "a remarkable fact."

Nor is it true that the school board system has worked with such admirable results during the last quarter of a century as its advocates pretend. In at least half of the English rural districts it has been a total failure—while in Scotland its effects have been not merely negatively, but positively, disastrous. It has nearly destroyed all the old-fashioned Scotch parish schools, whose results have been witnessed in every quarter of the globe. They turned out some of the best Scotchmen of every generation—men who carried the name of Great Britain all over the civilised world, have been the pioneers of British progress, the architects of British empire, and have largely contributed to the foundation of that prestige which ensures our supremacy more effectually than military force. Hundreds of such men, besides others no less eminent at home, have come out of these good old schools, whose masters took a pride in their work and a personal interest in their pupils. If they noticed a promising lad they cultivated his powers with special care, and continued to assist him after he had gone to the University. The pres-

ent system practically prevents the board school masters from showing any feeling of this kind. Good and bad are hustled through the school alike,—the master's only object being to get a good report and a corresponding grant.

As with the Education Bill, so with the Agricultural Ratings Bill. Both have been described as villainies of the deepest dye, and both have been, and are to be, encountered with the whole armoury of obstruction. The two great falsehoods propagated in regard to the Agricultural Ratings Bill are, first, that it is grossly unjust to relieve only one interest from local burdens without giving relief to others at the same time which are equally entitled to it; and, secondly, that what is offered as a boon to the farmer is in reality meant for the pocket of his landlord. The answer to the first is very simple. Government have the whole question of local taxation under consideration, with the view to an equitable readjustment of it extending to the whole community. But as other interests, if equally entitled to relief, are not equally in want of it, Government have given to the agricultural interest something to go on with in the meantime. We are not to withhold assistance from a ship which is actually sinking because there are others in sight which are labouring deeply in the water. Sir William indeed denies that agriculture is suffering under any exceptional distress. But he would not say this if he looked forward to many more contested elections.

As for the second fiction—namely, that the landlord will appropriate the whole relief given to the farmer—we exposed it in our

last number,¹ and now we see that Mr Chaplin comes forward with exactly the same refutation of it. What the landlords really want are good paying tenants. They want to see their farms let. Capital has to be coaxed on to the land. If the owner were short-sighted enough to pocket this remission, he would drive good tenants away, and lose far more in the shape of rent than he could ever hope to gain by taking advantage of the Government bill. Yet a Radical speaker in the west of England tells an assembly of his countrymen that under the bill as it stands the occupants of the Treasury Bench will find the value of their estates increased by two millions and a half! Two generations ago it was the Radical custom to run about the country abusing the Church of England. The Archbishop of Canterbury had "a hundred thousand a-year wrung from the blood and bones of the people." That was the formula. But we think Mr Barlow caps it.

This whole system of impudent mendacity is necessary to justify obstruction. The Opposition in Parliament must have something to say for themselves,—*si possint recte, si non, quocunque modo*. And if they cannot find real objections, they must of course invent fictitious ones. That goes without saying. In the lobby of the House of Commons information on this subject is usually to be obtained with very little difficulty. The Radical rank and file have no interest in concealing the nature of their tactics. "Obstruct these abominable measures by every means in our power? Why, of course, we shall." And what this party decides upon to-

day the leaders must accept tomorrow. Even if they wished, which they don't, they can't afford to interfere with obstruction; but they prefer to take part in it, and when they abstain from this, to connive at it. As long ago as the 21st of April they made no secret of their intentions with regard to the Agricultural Ratings Bill. They meant to prolong the struggle in Committee as long as possible; and for what purpose? Why, simply to delay the other legislative measures of the Government, and throw the business of the session into as much confusion as possible. This was allowed to become known, and well have they carried out their intentions. On Wednesday, May the 13th, Mr Knox's instruction to the Committee for extending the Agricultural Bill to Ireland was debated for no less than four hours, in spite of Mr Balfour's appeal to the Opposition to divide upon it, as it was clearly not a proposal which at that time admitted of any lengthened discussion. When at length the House did get into Committee, the consideration of the first clause alone was protracted for five nights, many of the amendments proposed being altogether outside the scope and purpose of the bill, or else aimed at its principle, and suitable only to a debate upon the second reading. It was finally passed through Committee at the point of the bayonet on the 22d of May, after an all-night sitting, spun out by the most desperate and undignified obstruction, more than justifying all that we have said upon the subject both in this and previous numbers, and showing that not only necessary legisla-

¹ "From Top to Bottom"—'Maga' (May), p. 794.

tion but even Parliamentary government is in danger. We hope the grass farmers of England and Scotland will not forget that the claims of grazing and dairy farming to the consideration of Parliament were received by the Opposition "with loud laughter."

As to the division of the rates between landlord and tenant, the system which prevails in Scotland, it obviously could not, without the gravest injustice, be introduced into England, unless, as Mr Courtney suggested, confined to future tenancies. To relieve the farmer at the expense of the State is one thing; to relieve him at his landlord's is another. The owner in reality pays the rates as it is, for if there were no rates he would get more rent: and the difference represents the sum either wholly or in part which the tenant hands over to the collector. If the present rate already allowed for in the rent is divided between landlord and tenant, the former would be paying twice over. If the State chooses to make the occupier a present of half his rates, well and good—the owner has no right to interfere with that. But to saddle him with an additional burden as a still further relief to the tenant was no part of the intention of the present bill, which after all is only a temporary measure, limited to five years: and before that time has expired the whole question of local taxation will have been reconsidered, and we hope satisfactorily adjusted.

On Friday, the 1st of May, the same course of obstruction was followed in Supply. After a discussion extending over many hours, only three votes were obtained, most of the divisions challenged being on irrelevant or unimportant points. The Finance

Bill, which ought to have been read a second time on the 30th of April, was purposely driven over to the 4th of May—thereby postponing the second reading of the Education Bill, and disordering, as the Opposition expected, Mr Balfour's pre-Whitsuntide arrangements. Then followed the insistence of the Radicals on debating the South African question immediately, still further impeding the business of Supply. But why pursue the wearisome detail? When the Radicals announced on the 15th of May their intention of continuing the discussion of the first and second clauses of the Rating Bill until they were closed—not until the subject was exhausted, not until their own greed of talk was satiated, but until they were stopped—they laid bare their plan of campaign for the remainder of the session. *Ex uno disce omnes.* As with the Rating Bill, so with every other bill which is open to the same treatment—that is to say, the stream of talk is to be kept flowing, after all the requirements of debate have been fulfilled, simply to prevent the Government from proceeding to any other business. This is the principle on which the Radicals mean to act: we now have it out of their own mouths; and if Mr Balfour had any lingering scruples as to the adoption of the shortest and sharpest methods for clearing the legislative path of all unnecessary impediments, this frank avowal should dissipate it.

The obstructionists as yet have succeeded only too well. The course they have pursued has been crafty and skilful, and betrays the hand of a master, however much it may have been kept in the background on particular occasions. They have been guilty of some

scandalous outbreaks; but it is rather by a process of quiet, wearisome, monotonous boredom that they have gained imperceptibly on the Government as the tide gains upon the beach, till we only now begin to recognise how much of the margin left for the despatch of public business has been already swallowed up.

The recess will give the public an opportunity for reflecting on the attitude which the English Radicals and their leaders have deliberately assumed. They acknowledge—with one notable exception—the reality and the depth of the agricultural depression. They acknowledge the necessity of maintaining the voluntary schools. Yet they resolutely refuse to stir a step towards the relief of either, and would rather see both perish than allow the present Government to gain any credit by assisting them. If the British public thoroughly realise this position, as well as the character of the means by which the Radicals are working for it, the Government need be afraid of no want of popular support in dealing with them promptly and vigorously.

It is not to be expected that the remainder of the session will pass away without further debates on foreign and colonial matters. But the prospect is brighter in one direction, at all events, than it was six weeks ago. As regards South Africa, there is nothing fresh to record since Mr Chamberlain's great speech on the 8th of May defining our policy, and vindicating Mr Rhodes from the galvanic rage of Mr Labouchere, and the more temperate and dignified, but not less mischievous, declamation of Sir William Harcourt, pre-eminently well qualified as it was

to damage our position in the Transvaal, and to encourage every disloyal element which exists among the Dutch population. The union of the two races, and the maintenance of our own supremacy, are the two pivots of our policy; and in Mr Rhodes we see a man who, in spite of recent errors, has done much to strengthen both. "But for Englishmen like Mr Rhodes," said Mr Chamberlain, "our English history would be much poorer and our British dominions would be much smaller." That is the way to put it. That is the right key. Macaulay, we believe, has wronged Warren Hastings on many points. But he was too much of a statesman not to recognise his splendid services and all that the British empire owed to him. He was clearly of opinion that his merits outweighed his errors, and that he was worthy to be laid among the English heroes and statesmen who "repose beneath the shadow of the great Abbey." We do not place Mr Rhodes on a level with Warren Hastings, but he is entitled to the same kind of consideration at the hands of every man of common-sense who knows by what means empires are constructed and supported.

Turning to Egypt, there seems to be good ground for hoping that few more encroachments on the time of Parliament are to be apprehended from that quarter. We are glad to see that what we strongly advocated last month as to the employment of Indian troops has found favour with the Government. Their appearance on the scene will probably complete what the defeats of the Dervishes have begun, and cause the authority of the Kalifa to collapse without much more serious fighting. The Dervishes

themselves would of course fight to the last, but the natives will not. They have begun to lose faith in the power of their rulers, and the correspondence of our Soudanese troops with their relatives in the Soudan has done much to convince the latter that it is their interest to fraternise with the British. By occupying Dongola on the west, and advancing towards Berber on the east, while the Kalifa is confronted by a hostile population on the south, we shall drive that potentate into a corner, and probably see the whole fabric of his power disap-

pear much more rapidly than it rose.

From Monday the 1st of June to Monday the 17th of August there are just eleven weeks, giving the Government forty-four working days exclusive of Fridays and Saturdays. There is time for them to get through their work, but there is none to spare, and we must end as we began, by expressing a hope that Mr Balfour will not allow himself to be deterred by the clamours of an angry and disappointed faction from doing his duty to Parliament, to the country, and to himself.

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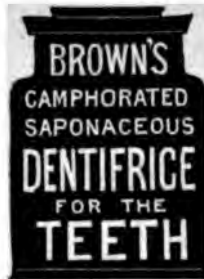
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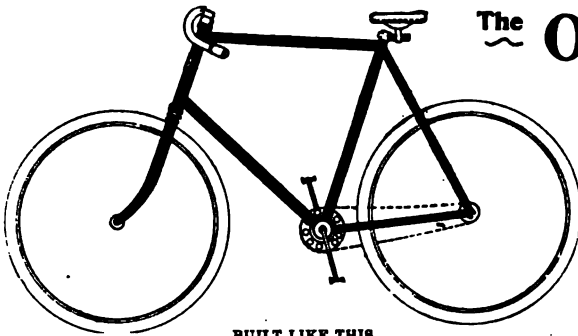
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